

**GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE:
THE UNESCO EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN CHINA**

Qingqing Han

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Education,
Indiana University

May 2019

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Doctoral Committee

David Rutkowski, PhD

Don Hossler, PhD

Gerardo M Gonzalez, PhD

Jennifer Brass, PhD

March 22, 2019

Acknowledgements

I am finally finishing my dissertation! This has been a moment I have long been waiting for. My heart is filled with gratitude and joy. Without gratitude, we have no life. I know my dear friends and family are sharing my joy around the world. And I want to extend my deepest appreciation to all of you.

My Ph.D. would not be complete without my advisors, mentors, and friends Don Hossler and David Rutkowski. You have provided me with continuous guidance and given me all the motivation, patience, and trust I needed. I also want to give a big thank you to my committee members Gerardo Gonzalez and Jennifer Brass for your support and trust. I would like to express my sincere gratitude also to Heidi Ross, an inspirational educator and role model for me.

I am a girl who was born in the time of the “one-child policy” in China, when many girls were given up even before birth, and I grew up in an age of rapid growth in China, studied and worked in the US, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Denmark, and Poland. My experiences have taught me to always cherish the time spent with friends and family. And I owe my life to my dearest parents-Xiuhua Ling and Yiyuan Han. Without the unconditional love you give me, I would not have had the chance to experience the world in such depth.

My cheerleader and best friend, Likun: You fulfill my world. I started my Ph.D. journey with you and you have been my life partner, confidante and family through this journey. I am very lucky to have you.

My family and my dearest friends across all corners of the world, you bring wisdom, strength, and sunshine into my life. And I cannot thank every one of you enough. May everyone live life to the fullest.

Qingqing Han

GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE:
THE UNESCO EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
IN CHINA

Using the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Project as a case study, this dissertation explores the practice of global educational governance (GEG) with a focus on how key actors in the ESD project promote it globally and specifically in China and exert influence on educational changes at a distance. The implementation of the UNESCO Project in the Chinese educational system represents a special mode of educational governance driven by the interplay of global-national-local actors. By analyzing data from interviews and documents, this study unpacks the mechanisms that UNESCO and the relevant Chinese actors interact and govern the educational policy and practice globally and in China, and how such processes embody features of the emerging GEG.

In this study, I argue that the ESD Project is an instantiation of the GEG in practice with interesting characteristics. *First*, this dissertation showcases the various roles actors at the global and national level play in the governance process. Specifically, the findings confirm that UNESCO acts as an orchestrator that exercises indirect and soft governance. And nation-state is not the sole player in the governing process anymore. International Organizations, NGOs, knowledge workers, and others play essential roles in the process. *Second*, the analysis reveals that the governance mechanisms used in this case are mostly *soft*. Networks help actors gain access to various resources, extend outreach, and amplify influence, facilitating the flows of knowledge across different scales. *Third*, the understanding of GEG can be further refined by taking into consideration the practice of stakeholders in countries with

strong state control such as the contemporary China. *Finally*, an important finding of this study is providing a unique perspective in the GEG structure to demonstrate that the collaboration between the multiple parties does *not* necessarily weaken the authority of the Chinese government or hollow out the state authority over educational practice. The study thus brings new insight into the current governance literature by developing an analysis of the shift of location of authority in the process of global educational governance.

David Rutkowski, PhD

Don Hossler, PhD

Gerardo M Gonzalez, PhD

Jennifer Brass, PhD

Table of Content

Table of Content.....	vi
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Tables	viii
Abbreviations.....	ix
List of Key Terms	x
Information on the Interviews.....	xii
Forward	1
Chapter 1 Framing the Issue	4
Introduction	4
UNESCO and China: The “Fallen Princess” and “New Rich”	9
The UNESCO ESD Project in China: A Brief Overview	20
Research Questions.....	24
Significance of the Study	25
Organization of the Chapters.....	27
Chapter 2 Conceptualizing Global Educational Governance.....	31
Introduction	31
Globalization and A New Conception of Governance.....	32
Global Educational Governance: Key Concepts	38
Conceptualizing Global Educational Governance	60
Summary.....	62
Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods	64
Methodological Design.....	64
Methods	67
Data Analysis.....	74
Summary.....	78
Chapter 4 UNESCO: Governing Softly at a Distance	79
Introduction	79
The Promotion of the ESD Project: An Instantiation of GEG	80
Globalizing ESD Discourse: Agenda, Norms, and Rules	88
Promoting Knowledge and Building Capacity	97
Forming Networks and “Space of Flows” in Educational Governance	105
Summary.....	118
Chapter 5 “Chewing” and “Feeding” the UNESCO ESD Ideas in China.....	120
Introduction	120
The Rationale for China to Promote the ESD Project	121
Chewing: Localizing the UNESCO ESD Ideas in Chinese Education	127
Feeding: Implementing the ESD Ideas in Chinese Education.....	132
Diverse Actors and Roles in the Network Governance	144
Summary.....	160
Chapter 6 Conclusion.....	162
Summary on Key Findings	163
Implications for UNESCO and Chinese Actors	168

Limitations of the Study	171
Future Research Topics	173
Summary.....	175
Appendices.....	177
Appendix 1 Figures on the numbers of projects and activities between UNESCO and China in 1989, 1991-1996, 1999	177
Appendix 2 Interview Protocol for the Executive Director and Staff in the National Committee	178
Appendix 3 Interview Protocol for the UNESCO Professionals working closely with China and the Chinese Loaded Staff (or Seconded) to UNESCO	180
Appendix 4 Interview Protocol for Officials in the Chinese Natcom	181
Appendix 5 Interview Protocol for UNESCO Professionals and Associated Experts	182
References.....	185
Curriculum Vitae.....	

List of Figures

Figure 1-1 China's Economic Growth, Year 1961-2016	14
Figure 1-2 The Multilevel Working Structure of the ESD Project	23
Figure 2-1 Pluri-scalar governance of education (Dale, 2005, p.132).....	41
Figure 3-1 Relevant research items of the study	65

List of Tables

Table 3-1 Information on the Interviews	72
Table 5-1 Roles and Functions of the Main Actors in the ESD case in China	145

Abbreviations

DESD	United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GEG	Global Educational Governance
ICTs	Information and communication technologies
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organizations
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

List of Key Terms

Terms	Explanations
Nation-states	By nation-states, in this study, I refer to “the institutional set comprising the whole state (i.e., national governments, the parliament, the political party system, the judiciary, and the state bureaucracy)”(Castells, 2008, p. 87).
Inter-governmental Organizations (IGOs)	There are different types of Inter-governmental Organizations (IGOs), such as IGOs for general purposes and global issues (e.g., the UN), IGOs for specialized issues (e.g., World Bank and UNESCO), and ad hoc agencies defined around a specific set of issues (e.g., sustainable development and environmental issues) (Castells, 2008, p. 87).
Soft mechanisms	The word soft has been used to describe forms of power, influence, and ways of governing that are distinct from hard— <i>binding and regulative</i> —forms (Kenneth W. Abbott & Snidal, 2000; Bokova, 2011; Lawn, 2006; Nye, 2004; Rutkowski, 2007a; Teng, 2010). In general, scholars use the soft metaphor to describe the <i>non-binding</i> characters of governance.
Soft power	In the field of political science and international relations, Nye (2004)’s formulation of “hard power” and “soft power” is well known and widely accepted in global politics. According to Nye (2004, p.x), soft power is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.”
Actors	In this study, actors refer to entities (individuals and organizations) that participate in and play a role in social system.
Nodes	In networks, nodes are the central “units”; they can be individuals, families, communities, organizations, nation states, or any other entity that can form or maintain formal (e.g., legal, economic) or informal (friendship, gossip) relationships (Ball & Junemann, 2012; Pescosolido, 2006).
Authority	Following Barnett and Finnemore (2004) and Avant, Finnemore, and Sell (2010), I define authority as the ability of one actor to deploy discursive and institutional resources and induce deference in others. Thus, authority is “a social construction” and may be seen as “an attribute generated from social relations” (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004, p. 162). In other words, one cannot

	have authority in a vacuum; authority is created by the recognition of others (Avant et al., 2010, pp. 9-10).
Interests	According to Giddens (1979), an interest is a socially constructed means to fulfill needs or desires.
Knowledge workers	Gunter (2012) calls the professionals in the epistemic communities the “knowledge workers” or “intellectual worker.”

Information on the Interviews

Site level	Interviewee type	Place	Name	Interview Date
International level	Professionals and experts working in or closely with the ESD work in UNESCO	Paris	Li	July 31, 2012
		Beijing	Ren	April 29, 2013
		Beijing	Cao	May 1, 2013
	Officials at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in connection with China	Paris	Da	July 19, 2012
		Paris	Yu	August 7, 2012
		Paris	Lang	August 10, 2012
		Paris	Yu	August 14, 2012
		Paris	Ma	August 17, 2012
National level	Executive Director, staff, and experts in relation to the National Committee	Beijing	Wu	May 9, 2012
		Beijing	Feng	May 8, 2012
		Beijing	Wang	May 31, 2012
		Jakarta	Sun	June 9, 2012
		Beijing	Sun	February 28, 2013
		Beijing	Sun	April 29, 2013
		Beijing	Sun	May 7, 2013
		Internet	Sun	March 8, 2014
	Officials in the Chinese Natcom (Ministry of Education)	Internet	Yang	May 11, 2012
		Internet	Hu	April 30, 2012

Forward

Do you believe in fate and destiny? I do. A series of seemingly accidental yet meant-to-be events happened that led to my work in the field of education and sustainability: in 2004, by misunderstanding, I went into a major in Education in college, sailed on a Ph.D. journey at Indiana University (IU) in 2009, and ultimately found a passion and dissertation topic in UNESCO and the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Project ever since.

Here is what happened. I set my mind to work for the United Nations (UN) during my internship at the UN Headquarters in New York in 2009. The summer break in 2011, therefore, I decided to spend the whole summer in the Ministry of Education in Beijing where they have the Chinese National Commission (Chinese Natcom) for UNESCO. This was naturally the best place to be for someone who had passion in education, the UN and China. The Director of the Chinese Natcom, a high-level official in the Ministry of Education, had a meeting with me in a beautiful spring day in May 2011 and told me about a project he has been involved with: the UNESCO ESD Project. He granted me rare access to the project documents and archives. I went in and pulled out a report on the project. This led me to study the work of the ESD Project and steered me towards working with the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and subsequently working in the field of sustainability in the UN for the past eight years.

It provided me with valuable opportunities to work with some founders and leading figures of the ESD Project in UNESCO and in China, such as Charles Hopkins (one of the “fathers” of global ESD ideas), Alexander Leicht (Chief of the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters), and Gendong Shi (the founder and Director of the UNESCO ESD Project in China). During these years, Mr. Shi took me as a

trusted advisor and provided unlimited access to all the project information and documents. After the fieldwork in 2014, he appointed me as his part-time Assistant Director and invited me to conferences and shared insights on their project plans. I established a long-term, trusting relationships with key actors in UNESCO Headquarters, Ministry of Education and the National Committee in China. This long-term relationship provided me continuous access to rich data for this project shaping the study into a more immersed project.

As of 2019 the UNESCO ESD Project is still ongoing globally and in China. Although I collected data for my study from 2011 to 2013 the data provided in this dissertation remains relevant and provides a historical and policy account of the implementation of the ESD at both macro and micro levels. Especially, with the worldwide adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), education and sustainability are getting more international attention.

The major findings of this study (as will be discussed in chapters 4-5) also underline the significance and relevance of this dissertation in the present day. The findings I will unpack in the chapters, although based on data collected from UNESCO and China, are not very unique to these two entities or in the field of education. The many features manifested in this study echo with studies on the new form of governance—I characterize as Global Educational Governance (GEG)—and broaden the current research with perspectives and empirical data from a historically authoritarian nation state-China. Although some emergent findings confirm that nation state like China does play a special role in this new form of governance, the trend of network governance and governance with soft mechanisms are evident and can be observed in many other cases as well.

In the following chapters, I invite you to take a closer look at the interaction between UNESCO and China, how such interaction in the ESD Project showcases the features of the Global Educational Governance and what it all means to policy and practice globally.

Chapter 1 Framing the Issue

Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholars have been gradually realizing nation states¹ are “no longer the sole arbiter of governing” in policy and practice (Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009, p. 18; Weiss, 2016). Nation states’ control and authority over policy are challenged by a variety of supranational and subnational actors (Baldwin, 2016; Ball, 2009; Dale, 2007; Dale & Robertson, 2002; Engel, 2009; Knill & Bauer, 2016; Mundy, 2007; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Rosenau, 1995; Rutkowski, 2007b; Weiss, 2016). Especially the supranational actors, such as international and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)², are playing an increasingly important role in global and national policy. As Barnett and Finnemore (2004) note, “International organizations have never been more central to world politics than they are today.”

The majority of the IGOs today was established after World War II and was created with distinct purposes and functions. For example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established to “build peace in people’s mind[s]” through education and international cooperation (UNESCO, 1945). Education, nevertheless, was historically a peripheral area of IGO interest. Before the 1960s, there were a limited number of IGOs (e.g., UNESCO) working in the field of education. Due to the political appeal of human capital theory and the subsequent neoliberal view of education, IGOs increasingly realized the significance of education and started to actively engage in education policy and practice (Jones & Coleman, 2005; Mundy, 1998). Notably, IGOs such as the World

¹ By nation-states, in this study, I refer to “the institutional set comprising the whole state (i.e., national governments, the parliament, the political party system, the judiciary, and the state bureaucracy)” (Castells, 2008, p. 87).

² There are different types of IGOs, such as IGOs for general purposes and global issues (e.g., the UN), IGOs for specialized issues (e.g., World Bank and UNESCO), and ad hoc agencies defined around a specific set of issues (e.g., sustainable development and environmental issues) (Castells, 2008, p. 87).

Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and UNESCO, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and International Labor Organization have become influential in the education.

These IGOs advocate a variety of authoritative decisions at the global level that may influence nation states in numerous ways. A number of studies confirm that IGOs are playing an increasingly significant role in the educational policy and practice at multiple levels (Jones & Coleman, 2005; King, 2007; Lewis, 2017; Lewis Steven; Sellar, 2015; McNeely, 1995; Resnik, 2006; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). Henry et al. (2001) , for example, argue that the OECD has evolved from a “think-tank” to a “global policy actor,” exerting greater influences on education. McNeely (1995) compares educational aims and principles expressed in the UNESCO constitution and policies with those in the national education policy statements of member states and non-member states of UNESCO, and argues that those national educational policies were, to great extent, a response to international organizations, particularly UNESCO’s, directives. Furthermore, realizing IGOs’ important role and influence, nation states appear to increasingly turn to the IGOs’ multilateral platform to build and wield their “soft power”³ or the ability to get what they want through attraction rather than coercion or payments (Nye, 2004) on international development. Kennedy and Cheng (2012), for example, argue that by actively engaging in multilateral collaborations, China has been gradually shifting its role in the international arena from “rule-taker” to “rule-maker” in the past decades.

³ In the field of political science and international relations, Nye (2004)’s formulation of “hard power” and “soft power” is well known and widely accepted in global politics. According to Nye (2004, p.x), soft power is “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.”

There has not, however, been enough attention on how, in practice, IGOs interact with national/local actors to promote educational policy and practice and exert influence in education at different levels. Through an examination of a specific case, this dissertation is situated to empirically study how IGOs may engage and interact with national/local actors in promoting educational policy and practice at a distance, and what it may represent on a global scale. This dissertation is set in the broad context of globalization and the interaction between one important IGO (i.e., UNESCO) and actors in one nation state (i.e., China) in educational governance. I discuss briefly emerging forms of educational governance associated with globalization and IGOs' increasingly importance in these new forms of educational governance below.

Globalization may refer to the entrenched and enduring patterns of global interconnectedness and interdependence facilitated by the extensive technological development in communications and transportation and the instant flows of knowledge and information (Avant et al., 2010; Held & McGrew, 2002, 2003) (see more discussion on globalization in chapter 2). In such context, time and space appear to become “compressed” (Harvey, 1989), highlighting that policies, ideas, and actions occurring in one part of the world may have effects on those in other places of the world. This view stresses the far-reaching implications of globalization in shaping almost every aspect of our society, including the ways in which education is governed. As scholars argue, in the context of globalization, nation states are no longer the exclusive site where educational governance takes place (Dale, 2007; Lawn, 2006; Lewis, 2017; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The ways in which education is governed evolve from the government-oriented, nation-state model to new forms, or “from government to governance” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 117).

In such context, education scholars also notice that the emerging forms of educational governance have yielded considerable space for a more diverse range of actors at multiple “scales”(Dale, 2007), ranging from individuals and communities to nation states and international actors. Specifically, there seems to be a growing attention to IGOs in governing educational issues and facilitating educational changes at various levels. Barnett and Finnemore (2004), notably, claim that IGOs have become products, facilitators, and autonomous actors of educational governance. A number of scholars also stress that IGOs help structure the normative understanding of the global ideas and practices in education and provide assistance to the nation states’ educational development (Hartmann, 2010; Jones, 2007b; Lewis, 2017; Mundy, 1998; Mundy & Ghali, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Rutkowski, 2007a; Tikly, 2017). Scholars and policy makers, however, have not focused on how these actors may engage themselves in the emerging educational governance structure and exert influence in educational changes. For example, more empirical studies are needed to understand how IGOs play their roles in the new forms of educational governance, how the national/local actors may get involved in the new forms of educational governance through their interactions with IGOs and other global actors, as well as the implications of such engagement in educational policy and practice.

The dimension of educational governance is expanding at the global, national, and local levels. The present study is an attempt to explore and enrich the understandings of this new form of educational governance. I characterize this emerging theme of educational governance as *global educational governance* (GEG) (see chapter 2 for the conceptualization of GEG) and explore the engagement of an IGO—UNESCO— in the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Project in China and its interaction with the Chinese actors in promoting educational ideas and

practice, as well as how this engagement may embody important features of this new form of governance in education. In this dissertation, I refer to global educational governance as the patterns of a range of actors (institutional and individual) at multiple scales (global, supranational, national, subnational, and local scales) exercising their agency, steering, influencing, and setting the directions of educational issues at a distance through hard and/or soft mechanisms.

There are a considerable number of influential IGOs working in the field of education, (e.g., UNESCO, World Bank, the UNICEF, UNDP, OECD and International Labour Organization) and exploring every IGO in education and every nation state is an immeasurable task beyond the scope of this study. Thus the spotlight of the study is on two interesting entities: UNESCO and China. UNESCO and China were chosen as key sites because UNESCO is currently touted as the premier United Nations (UN) educational agency and claims to be a critical actor in bridging some gaps in global governance (Bokova, 2011); and China is emerging as a major political and economic power in the international arena.

In the following sections, I will illustrate the two important entities of the study— UNESCO and China—with an historical review of their relationship. I then present a brief overview of the UNESCO ESD Project in China, and highlight its multilevel structural characteristics and how it provides a rich and in-depth perspective lacking in the study of GEG. The purpose and research questions of the study are then justified, along with an elucidation of the significance of the study and the organization of the dissertation chapters.

UNESCO and China: The “Fallen Princess” and “New Rich”

UNESCO: A Crucial Actor in International Educational Development

UNESCO was established in 1945 with the recognition that

cooperation in education and furtherance of cultural interchange in the arts, the humanities and the sciences will promote the freedom, the dignity and the well-being of all and therefore assist in the attainment of understanding, confidence, security and peace among the peoples of the world (UNESCO, 1945, p. 1).

As a specialized agency within the UN system, UNESCO enjoys certain autonomy yet also works with the UN and a diverse set of stakeholders to carry out its missions. It seeks to contribute to peace and security by creating a space for dialogue and collaboration among the nation states, providing an international platform for intellectual cooperation (UNESCO, 2012e).

The UNESCO General Conference and Executive Board are UNESCO’s two major governing bodies. The General Conference, consisting of representatives of 195 member states, determines UNESCO’s policies, main fields of work, and budget (UNESCO.int). Each member state has one vote in the General Conference. UNESCO also has an Executive Board with 58 states, which oversees its overall management, prepares the work of the General Conference, and monitors its programs and projects. In addition, the UNESCO Secretariat is its administrative body, which is responsible for implementing and monitoring UNESCO's policies and programs, maintaining relationships with distinct stakeholders, and strengthening UNESCO's presence and actions worldwide. The Secretariat, composed of a Director-General and Staff appointed internationally and locally, is based in UNESCO’s Paris Headquarters as well as in field offices, institutes, and centers all around the globe.

As for its financial structure, the UNESCO General Conference determines the scale of assessments of Member States’ contribution to UNESCO based on a sliding

scale. After the 39th in 2018 General Conference, UNESCO (2018c) announced a budget of US \$653 million for the 2018-2020 programming and regular budget. Besides its regular budget, UNESCO enjoys a number of extra-budgetary resources. What's more, UNESCO's Education Sector is its largest sector, accounting for around 47% of the UNESCO budget, demonstrating that education is the “priority of the priorities of UNESCO” (KokkalisProgram, 2010). UNESCO's financial resources, however, are extremely limited for an IGO with over 60 field offices (over 2,100 civil servants from some 170 countries) and numerous projects in the fields of education, science, and culture. In addition, its financial situation may become worse when certain political issues arise such as the political turmoil involving the acceptance of Palestine as a member state in 2011 (discussed later), influencing its regular budget and extra-budgetary recourses. For example, UNESCO faced severe financial shortage and political turbulence when United States withdrew from UNESCO from the mid-1980s to early 2000 and has suspended its memberships dues since 2011 (more will be discussed later).

As once one of the most significant IGOs specialized in education, UNESCO enjoyed its glory days, especially before the 1970s. Its comparative advantages were seen in its unique characteristics as a laboratory for ideas, a clearinghouse, a norm-setter and a capacity-builder. It developed a selection of ideas (e.g., universal basic education, Life Long Learning, and Sustainable Development), projects and programs (e.g., the literacy projects, the Fundamental Education project and Education for All project) to enhance educational development in poor and/or post-colonial countries, increase literacy rates, alleviate poverty, promote basic education and rights to education, and advocate for gender equality. UNESCO's two reports—*Learning to Be: The world of education today and tomorrow* (1972) and *Learning, the Treasure*

Within (1996) had profound influence in nation states' educational planning and development. Moreover, a number of international declarations, conventions, and recommendations were issued to promote human rights, gender equality, sustainable development, teachers' status, such as the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), and the World Declaration on Education for All (1990).

With a diverse membership and its one-member-one-vote regulation, however, UNESCO has been embroiled in controversy and political turmoil since the 1970s. At that time, with the rise of the newly independent countries, the then Director-General of UNESCO, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, actively advocated for the rights of developing countries and a New International Economic Order (Jones & Coleman, 2005). Such actions enraged the world's powerful countries and, in 1984, citing its "extraneous politicization," "mismanagement" and "lack of efficiency" as well as the fact that 80 percent of UNESCO's budget at the time was spent at the Paris Headquarters, three of the world's most powerful countries and UNESCO's significant donors—the United States, United Kingdom, and Singapore—withdrawed their memberships and financial contributions from UNESCO (Farnham, 1986; Finn, 1986; Hüfner & Naumann, 1986; Sack, 1986; Weiler, 1986). This contributed to UNESCO's "open crisis" and a period of "turbulent non-growth" in the 1980s and 1990s (Jones & Coleman, 2005; Sack, 1986). With great effort on UNESCO's part, these three countries eventually rejoined the organization. This, however, did not last long. During the 36th General Conference in October 2011, UNESCO's acceptance of Palestine as a member state led to another political controversy and resulted in the United States withholding its funding—22% of UNESCO's regular budget (UNESCO, 2012b). UNESCO found itself falling again into financial shortage and political turbulence. In October 2017, moreover, the Trump

administration filed the notice to official withdraw its membership from UNESCO. The withdraw was in effect from January 1, 2019(Adamson, 2019).

In summary, as highlighted by the two officials at the Ministry of Education in China, UNESCO could once be described as a “princess” (Yu, personal communication, August 14, 2012; Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012) in international educational development. However, its professional capacity in international development, research, and technical assistance has gradually declined since the 1970s (Jones & Coleman, 2005). It has increasingly become a “fallen princess” (Yu, personal communication, August 14, 2012; Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012) in the face of a series of conundrums, such as the rise of the other IGOs (e.g., World Bank, OECD) competing for international educational development programs as well as limited resources, excessive bureaucracy, politicization, and lack of efficiency.

Despite all these challenges, the “fallen princess” has not lost all of her privileges. UNESCO remains a major political platform for over 190 countries to gather and discuss education-related topics. However, there has been little research on UNESCO and its relation to educational governance (with exceptions such as Mundy, 1999, 2007, 2010), which is paradoxical given its relatively long history of engagement and significant influence in global educational issues. Moreover, much of the research on UNESCO and its work in educational policy focuses on the international level⁴. Some studies on UNESCO’s educational policy focus on the national and local responses to UNESCO’s educational agendas (Bhola, 1997 ; Y. Liu & Constable, 2010). Very little empirical research examines these organizations from the inside to see how actors at multiple levels interplay and interpenetrate in the emerging

⁴ See Beech (2009); Hartmann (2010); Iriye (2002); Jones and Coleman (2005); King (2007); Limage (2007); McNeely (1995); Mundy (1999); Mundy and Ghali (2009).

educational governance. In-depth research on the roles and engagement of UNESCO in the governance of global educational topics, therefore, is needed.

China: An Emerging Power in World Economy and Politics

Scholars and policy makers from multiple disciplines consider China a country undergoing substantial economic, political, and educational development (T. Fang & Lien, 2012; Gu, Humphrey, & Messner, 2008; Hu, 2012; Kennedy & Cheng, 2012; Z. Shi & Zhang, 2008; H. Wang, 2017; Westman & Broto, 2018; Xiao, 2012). China's economy has experienced outstanding growth in the past three decades, often contributed to its Open Door Policy reform. After decades of tight control and central planning over state economy and foreign trade, the Chinese government loosened its hold over certain economic activities in 1978, allowing greater freedom in trade and foreign investments.

This market-oriented movement has generated a major successful economic outcome. Figure 1-1 demonstrates the unprecedented economic growth of China from 1961 to 2016. Despite the low growth rate during the early 1990's due to high inflation and high unemployment rates, contributed to drastic privatization of state-owned enterprises, China's economic growth still maintained an average growth rate of over 10% each year (Figure 1-1). In 2010, China surpassed Japan in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and became the second largest economy in the world (Bloomberg News, Aug 16, 2010; Globaledege). Accompanying the unprecedented economic growth, China's international trade augmented tremendously. Beginning from the 1990s, the Chinese government encouraged international trade based on its market-oriented economic reform.

China is undoubtedly an emerging power or the leader of the "new rich" (Yu, personal communication, August 14, 2012; Ma, personal communication, August 17,

2012) in the world economy as well as global politics. A number of political scientists argue that as an emerging economic and political power, China has experienced a “peaceful rise”(Buzan, 2010) in international society. China’s peaceful rise, especially it’s new “One-Belt-One-Road” initiative since 2013, has attracted political scientists, scholars, and policy maker’s attentions to China’s involvement in global governance issues (e.g., Buzan, 2010; Chan, Lee, & Chan, 2012; T. Fang & Lien, 2012; Gu et al., 2008; Kennedy & Cheng, 2012; Patrick & Thaler, 2010; Solana, 2015; H. Wang, 2017; H. J. N. R. WANG, 2009; Westman & Broto, 2018). These scholars, nonetheless, focus mainly on China’s economic, political, or social involvement in governance issues at the global scale (e.g., world trade, political order, food and security, health, climate change, etc.); China’s specific involvement in global educational governance is still insufficiently recognized and studied.

Figure 1-1 China's Economic Growth, Year 1961-2016⁵



⁵ Source: World Bank Database
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?contextual=default&end=2016&locations=CN&start=1961&view=chart>.

As China has become a “new rich”, its education system may not require the same “hardware”, or material sources other countries may need (Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012). Rather, China needs to cooperate with international community and develop “software”; in Ma’s words, “what China needs the most is knowledge and experience from UNESCO and other international organizations.” In the context of education, according to Ma and Da (personal communication, July 19, 2012), “hardware” refers financial resources, buildings, supplies, and other material recourses; “software” covers both institutional and individual levels. To develop “software” may include building institutional and individual capacity in education, setting standards for educational development, training qualified teachers, and enhancing research level. In the field of education, there has already been growing literature on China’s cooperation with IGOs, mainly with the World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO (Du, 2010c, 2011b; Ma, 2007; Shen, 2009; Teng, 2010; K. Wang, 2008; X. Wang, 2008; Z. Xie, 2010b). However, education scholars who have concerns with China’s cooperation with IGOs rarely perceive such cooperation in the global educational governance framework. There is a research gap to be filled in the fields of political science and education on how the actors in China may be engaging in the global educational governance and international development issues through its cooperation with IGOs. In this respect, this study provides an empirical case for exploring Chinese actors’ attempt in engaging in global educational issues, particularly by interacting with UNESCO.

The Emerging Relationship between UNESCO and China

UNESCO and China, for more than six decades, have enjoyed a long-standing relationship (Du, 2010c; Shen, 2009; Z. Xie, 2010a). Due to political and economic

reasons⁶, the UNESCO-China cooperation was quite limited before the Open Door Policy (Qian, 2006; M. Zhang, 2010). During this time, UNESCO and China did not have much interaction in the professional areas of education, science, and culture (Shen, 2009; Teng, 2010; Yu, 2004). After the Open Door Policy in 1978, Deng Xiaoping, the leader of the nation who design this policy at the time, acknowledged UNESCO's strategic advantages in education and science, and declared that China was will to support UNESCO and would also welcome any help from the IGO (Qian, 2006). To facilitate their cooperation, China and UNESCO established specialized organization counterparts—a ministerial level organization in the Ministry of Education—the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (hereinafter the Chinese Natcom), and the UNESCO Beijing Office⁷ in Beijing, China, founded in 1979 and 1984, respectively. Chinese Natcom is a ministerial level organization housed in Ministry of Education in Beijing, China. Its main responsibility is to communicate with UNESCO on behalf of the Chinese government and coordinate UNESCO-related activities and projects in China. The establishment of the two organizations enhanced UNESCO and China's capacity in communicating with each other and built an organizational foundation for further developing the UNESCO-China relationship (C. Zhang, 2006). With the coordination of the Chinese Natcom and Beijing Office,

⁶ UNESCO and China began their relationship with the establishment of UNESCO in 1945 under the government of the Chinese National Party (CNP). In 1949, after two years of Civil War with CNP, the Chinese Communist Party took over the government and established the People's Republic of China, or the New China. The Chinese National Party moved its government, the Republic of China (hereafter Taiwan) to the island of Taiwan. The New China, however, was not recognized as a member of the UN family from 1949 to 1970. During that time, instead, Taiwan represented the Chinese government in the UN. In October 29, 1971, with the strong support from developing countries, the UN welcomed the New China as its member state. Four days later, UNESCO granted the New China its membership (M. Fang, 2010). During that time, China was a country in political conflicts and financial shortage.

⁷ The UNESCO Beijing Office has become UNESCO's Cluster Office to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of Korea. The responsibility of the Beijing Office is basically ensuring interaction between the Member States of the cluster, interaction with other United Nations agencies, and interaction between the Member States of the cluster and UNESCO's work (Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/bfc/cluster-offices/>).

China started a learning process in cooperation with UNESCO. Their interaction developed in 1990s (Zhang, 2010) with the number of activities between UNESCO and China increasing from 0 in early 1978 to 300 in 1999, and 0 to 120 in education (Appendix 1).

In the 21st century, the peaceful rise of China, as well as the financial crisis and political turmoil of UNESCO, drew the two sides closer for a “deeper and broader” (Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012; Lang, personal communication, August 10, 2012) relationship (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2007; Du, 2010c, 2011b; M. Fang, 2010; Z. Xie, 2010a). With a primary focus on developing countries, China acknowledges UNESCO as an increasingly important multilateral platform upon which China may internationalize itself to build and wield its “soft power” in international society (M. Chen & Xiong, 2010; Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2007, 2010, 2011b; Zhou, Xiong, & Deng, 2009). According to officials in the Chinese Natcom and professionals in UNESCO, China has fought for increasing “China’s voice” or “soft power” in the international community” (Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012; Lang, personal communication, August 10, 2012; Yu, personal communication, August 14, 2012; Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012). During interviews, a number of the interviewees used the phrase “increasing China’s voice” when talking about China’s expectations and motivations in cooperating with UNESCO. “Increasing China’s voice”, as they suggested, refers to advocating and “selling (Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012)” Chinese experience and ideas and enhancing China’s influence in the international community. The interviewees, moreover, referred “increasing China’s voice” as one crucial way to build China’s “soft power” in international society. Consequently, China has become more “proactive” in

engaging with UNESCO's initiatives, e.g., actively participating in UNESCO's projects, establishing the Chinese funds-in-trust in UNESCO⁸, and sending secondees, or loaded staff,⁹ to UNESCO (Yu, personal communication, August 14, 2012, Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012).

The UNESCO-China relationship, as a result, appears to be moving more toward a “mutual-benefiting” partnership, as highlighted by Lang, an official at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris during the interviews (personal communication, August 10, 2012). When asked what the current UNESCO-China relationship is like, UNESCO professional—Ma (personal communication, August 17, 2012)—and a Chinese seconded to UNESCO—Yu (personal communication, August 14, 2012) —told a love story of a “*fallen princess*” (UNESCO) and a “*new rich*” (China) to depict the “mutual-benefiting” UNESCO-China relationship. Ma, for example, denoted,

In the UNESCO-China relationship, UNESCO is like a princess, and China was originally a peasant. In the very beginning, China followed UNESCO most of the times. He [China] felt honored and excited when UNESCO invited him to just have dinner with her. But now, the relationship has moved to another stage. Despite his peasant origin, China has become the new rich. His relationship with the princess has also become more equal, especially after the princess encountered with financial crisis and became a ‘fallen princess’. The fallen princess has to get closer with the new rich now. The new rich, on the other hand, has the ability to invite the princess out for fancy dinner and provide princess the resources she needs. At least, China has changed from a follower to an equal partner in cooperating with UNESCO.

⁸ The Chinese funds-in-trust in UNESCO is seen as a “historic event” and “landmark” (Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012) in the development of UNESCO-China cooperation. It is the first Chinese funds-in-trust in UNESCO. The \$8 million funds-in-trust was established in March 2012 to support African education over the period of four years. During its signing ceremony, the Chinese Vice Minister of Education emphasized that “the Chinese people and government attach great importance to China’s continuous cooperation with UNESCO...and the funds-in-trust are just the beginning of the more in-depth cooperation between the two” (UNESCO Press, March 2, 2011).

⁹ Secondees, or loaded staff, are personnel that are funded directly by the sending country and do not directly affect UNESCO’s budget. They are unique in that they work within the organization yet do not fall within the strict quota system that is meant to ensure equitable national representation within the organization. In 2006, five Chinese experts were selected and sent to UNESCO to work for two years. This was the first time the Chinese government made a systematic plan to send Chinese experts to work in UNESCO (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2006a). Since then, the Chinese government has “seconded” over ten Chinese experts to work for UNESCO. Most of the secondees are government officials working in Ministry of Education or its affiliated organizations.

It is worth noting here that as we move through the dissertation, dependency theory is something to consider when thinking about the relationship between UNESCO—a “fallen” actor— and China—an increasingly more powerful nation state. Dependency theory highlights two sets of states or actors, some describes as dominant/dependent or center/periphery, and argues that external political, economic and social factors and interests shape the interactions between the two sets of actors and thus play significant role in their the development of their relations (Bodenheimer, 1971; Brass, Longhofer, Robinson, & Schnable, 2018; Ferraro, 2008). Dependency theory, however, is beyond the scope of this dissertation and therefore will not be fully employed in this study. The resource dependency in the UNESCO-China relationship—especially the role of funding and financing—could be a potential topic for future studies and could bring valuable insights and perspectives on further unpacking the UNESCO-China interactions.

The active interplay between UNESCO and China has created a space for new forms of educational governance, which is of great concern for scholars in different fields. Despite the long history of relationship between UNESCO and China in education, there has been surprisingly little research, especially empirical studies, on their cooperation in education, their effort of engaging in GEG, or the implications of such in educational policy and practice, leaving much room for this study. UNESCO interacts with China in the field of education in a number of ways such as through policies, publications, conferences, international collaboration and exchanges, etc. In this dissertation, I utilize the case of UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Project to demonstrate the engagement of UNESCO and Chinese actors in promoting the ESD Project and whether or not UNESCO’s engagement in the promotion process may embody global educational governance. The ESD Project

is chosen because it is a “flagship” project between UNESCO and China and makes a compelling case for investigating the interaction and negotiation of UNESCO and Chinese actors on international educational issues.¹⁰ I briefly introduce the ESD Project and justify the selection of the case in detail in the following section.

The UNESCO ESD Project in China: A Brief Overview

As Sutton and Levinson (2001, p. 2) note, policy, especially authorized policy is “constantly negotiated and reorganized in the ongoing flow of institutional life.” To lay the groundwork for understanding the interactions of the ESD stakeholders in the implementation process of the ESD Project, therefore, it is necessary to briefly review the history of the ESD Project, introduce the main stakeholders, and articulate the working structure of the project in China.

In 1994, UNESCO adopted an international project on sustainability—the UNESCO Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development (EPD) Project. The EPD Project was then implemented in a number of the UNESCO member states. In December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the initiation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) (2005-2014) and designated UNESCO as the lead agency, which shifted the international discourse and practice from Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development to ESD (more will be discussed in chapter 4). In this dissertation, the implementation of the EPD Project and the DESD are acknowledged as the ESD Project.

In 1998, entrusted by the Chinese Natcom, a research team in the Beijing Academy of Educational Science reviewed international ESD ideas and the Chinese ESD experience, and developed the ESD theory and practice based on Chinese

¹⁰ Based on communications with three senior officials in Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and two professors in prestigious Chinese universities with expertise on UNESCO-China relationship in June and July, 2011.

context. Under the auspices of the Chinese Natcom, from 2002 to 2004, three different entities were established to promote the ESD Project in China on the basis of the core expert team—the National Working Committee of ESD in China¹¹, Beijing Association of ESD, and the ESD Research Center. These three entities will be called as *the National Committee* in this study (as marked in the red box in Figure 1-2). The three distinct yet interrelated entities enjoy interesting relationships. The National Working Committee of the UNESCO ESD Project in China is the official coordinating body of the project. It is under the direct leadership of the Chinese Natcom and consists of committee members from national and local governments, academia and research center, and local schools (The National Working Committee for ESD in China). Beijing Association of ESD is a non-governmental organization that is initiated by a group of researchers in Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences, educators, schools, and voluntary groups in related fields (Beijing Association of ESD, 2004). The ESD Research Center is the research arm under the leadership of Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences.

In addition, the National Committee sets up a number of ESD local committees¹² to carry out research and promote practices for the sustainability of the local economy, environment, and social development. The local committees may be located in schools, local education bureaus, research centers, universities, or other related organizations. The National Committee is responsible for reviewing the annual reports and plans made by the local committees, collecting stories and experiences

¹¹ It was named the National Working Committee for Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development in China when first established and changed its name to National Working Committee for ESD in China in 2006 (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009b).

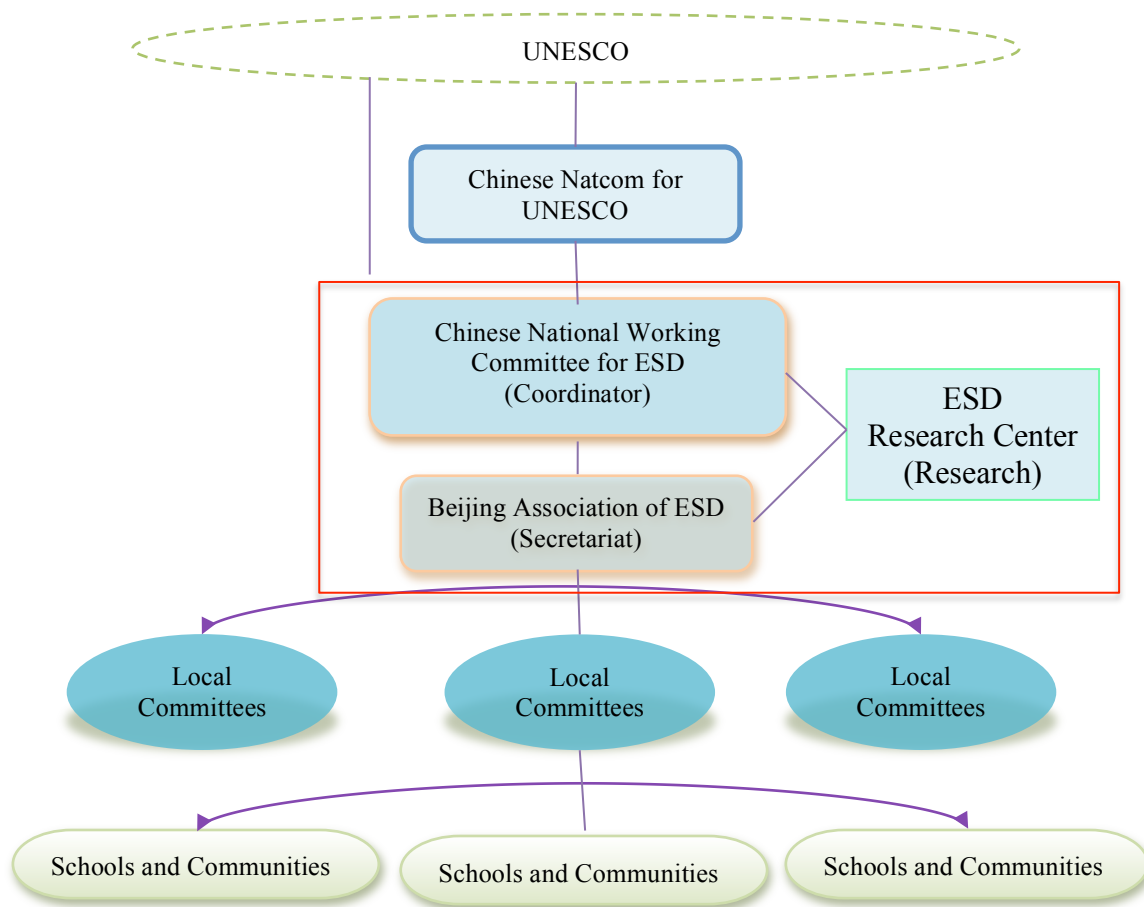
¹² The functions of local committees encompass creating an annual working plan for ESD in the local area, providing guidance to local schools and districts, organizing teacher training, conducting research on ESD in the local area, disseminating and updating ESD theory and experience of ESD, cooperating with other stakeholders, and submitting an annual report on the ESD project to the National Committee, etc. (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011).

and local research, building and expanding the networks of stakeholders within the local area, etc. (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011).

Accordingly, a multilevel working structure is established to promote the ESD Project in China with multiple actors, e.g., UNESCO, the Chinese Natcom, the National Committee, ESD Local Committees, and ESD schools and districts (see Figure 1-2).

The multilevel working structure makes the ESD Project an interesting case for examining the interactions between UNESCO and Chinese actors. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the emerging forms of governance today appear to involve actors from multiple scales. This underpins one core rationale for the selection of the ESD Project for with the ESD Project there are theoretical discussions on the new forms of governance in education (or GEG) that can be translated into an empirical study. With its multilevel structure, the ESD Project provides a rich and in-depth perspective on the current practice of GEG at global (e.g., UNESCO) and national/local scales (e.g., the National Committee) in the globalization processes.

Figure 1-2 The Multilevel Working Structure of the ESD Project



Diverse relationships are formed in promoting the ESD Project at different scales¹³. Considering the intricacy of the relationships and the amount of work needed to unpack each one, this dissertation focuses attention on the work of UNESCO and the National Committee in the ESD Project for two primary reasons. *First*, according to Sun (personal communication, June 9, 2012), a key figure in the implementation of the ESD Project in China, the National Committee is the key stakeholder and “bridge” that connects the global, national, and local entities in the implementation of the ESD Project in China. The National Committee adopts the UNESCO ESD ideas and coordinates the ESD Project in schools and districts. It also cooperates with a range of

¹³ For example, the relationships of UNESCO and the Chinese Natcom or Ministry of Education, UNESCO and the National Committee, and UNESCO and the local committees.

actors, e.g., international organizations, enterprises, governments, schools, communities, and universities (G. Shi & Han, 2012).

Second, the work of the National Committee can best represent the essences of the ESD idea and practice in China. The National Committee designs and guides the ESD Project under the auspices of Chinese Natcom (which is part of the Ministry of Education in China). The National Committee is government-affiliated; yet, it enjoys certain autonomy since most of its work is undertaken by the secretariat of the ESD Project— Beijing Association of ESD, a non-profit organization. There are, therefore, a wide range of stakeholders involved with the National Committee, such as government officials in the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment, professionals of the Chinese Natcom, officials in local government, NGOs, enterprise, school principals and teachers, communities, etc. (Sun, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Thus, exploring the National Committee's engagement in the project and its interactions with UNESCO can showcase a range of ESD stakeholders interacting in the implementation of an international project.

Research Questions

In this study, I first investigate how UNESCO utilizes the various mechanisms to engage itself in the implementation of the ESD Project internationally and in China. I then closely examine how the UNESCO ESD idea was understood and implemented by Chinese actors. In this process, I situate the case in a framework of global educational governance. In particular, I focus on unpacking whether or not the process of implementing the international ESD idea in China may help explore the emerging GEG structure in practice, and how UNESCO has played a major role.

The following questions serve as the overarching *research questions*.

1. How did UNESCO engage itself and exert influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China?
2. To what extent and how was the UNESCO ESD Project promoted in China at the national level through the collaboration between UNESCO and Chinese stakeholders?
3. How and to what extent did UNESCO and the relevant Chinese actors govern educational policy and practice in the case of ESD in China?
4. How and to what extent does the process of promoting the UNESCO ESD ideas in China appear to represent features of emerging global educational governance?

Significance of the Study

Using a multi-disciplinary approach, this dissertation makes twofold arguments—scientific and pragmatic—to build an understanding of the literature on UNESCO and China’s involvement in global educational governance as well as the ESD work in UNESCO and China.

This study engages theoretical discussions for understanding one IGO (i.e., UNESCO) and nation states, such as China, in the global educational governance structure and the ways in which such governance is exercised. This study is among the first few empirical projects investigating the engagement and interactions of UNESCO and China in promoting the ESD work through the theoretical lens of global educational governance (or GEG). The lack of transparency within many IGOs and the inaccessibility to IGOs’ work, to a great extent, lead to a large research gap on the empirical study of IGOs’ work in education, especially on the interactions among the IGOs and nation states in educational governance and the influence of such interactions in educational practice. This study seeks to bridge certain research gaps and enrich the research on the topic of global educational governance, especially: 1)

the implications and key features of global educational governance in practice; 2) The diverse roles different actors play in global educational governance, such as UNESCO, Chinese government, knowledge workers, policy elites; 3) UNESCO's interactions with nation states such as China.

Additionally, it is difficult to access to the national government and authorities in China. I was fortunate enough to work closely with the National Committee, the Chinese Natcom in Ministry of Education, and the ESD Section at the UNESCO Paris Headquarters, building trust and close connections with the staff in these organizations to conduct pre-dissertation research in the summers of 2011 and 2012, and follow-up research in 2013 and 2014. By so doing, the study enriches people's understanding of how an international project is able to be transferred from the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris to a nation state such as China and the changes the international project may bring in the nation state. Moreover, I am able to study governance issues from within UNESCO, the Chinese Natcom, and the National Committee, linking global and national actors and revealing the emerging global educational governance features through the case of the ESD Project.

From a methodological perspective, this study indicates how UNESCO's engagement at the international and national levels can be explained through a qualitative study design. In the methodological design of the study, nation state (i.e., China) is not assumed to be the basic or the sole unit of analysis. Rather, it encompasses the global and national perspectives and focuses on the interactive and dynamic interplay between UNESCO and the National Committee. Studying the interactions of actors at distinct locations can be methodologically challenging due to the difficulty of data accessibility and collection. This study provides an archetype of

how to conduct research on the interactions of actors at a distance, physically as well as culturally and politically.

This study is significant for its theoretical and methodological as well as pragmatic contributions. As I observed in my field study, a great number of Chinese ESD stakeholders possessed very limited knowledge of UNESCO and its work. Meanwhile, professionals in UNESCO knew little about the ESD practice in China or the influence of the ESD Project in Chinese education. Policy makers at UNESCO and China suggested that an examination of the practice of the ESD Project with a multilevel approach is urgently needed. To that end, this study connects the ESD stakeholders in UNESCO and China, facilitates knowledge exchange among them, and opens “channels of communication among those who participate in different moments of policy formation and implementation” (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 16).

Organization of the Chapters

This dissertation consists of six chapters, including the introduction and conclusion. This introduction has delineated the contexts, a brief review of the ESD Project, the purpose and research questions of the study, as well as its significance. Chapter 2 “Conceptualizing Global Educational Governance” presents a literature review mainly on three bodies of literature—globalization, global governance, and educational governance. The chapter starts with an examination of the concepts of globalization and global governance. It highlights that globalization refers to the scale of interconnectedness and interdependence of individuals and organizations at a distance, and it is also a normative notion that encompasses a value orientation and an ideological and identity formation embedded in a social imaginary. The chapter carries forward an illustration of the fundamental concepts—scales, actors, mechanisms, networks, shift of location of authority—that are used to explore and

explain the new forms of authority in the global and educational governance literature. In this study, global educational governance does not suggest a central authority or any specific political entity that has authority over others. GEG encompasses governments, involving a wide range of actors at multiple scales, such as governmental entities, international/regional organizations, subnational/local actors, and individuals. I provide a working definition of GEG and introduce four main hypotheses for the present study. By elucidating the key concepts and working definition of GEG, I set up a conceptual framework of GEG for the study.

Chapter 3 “Methodology and Methods” discusses the methodological design and methods employed in the study to address the three main research questions. It first outlines the methodological approach of the study that draws heavily on insights from the critical qualitative research approach and is also informed by an approach to study educational policy as practice, as well as the multilevel research perspective. I then describe the two main methods used to obtain an understanding of engagement of UNESCO and the National Committee in the ESD Project. One method was interviewing actors at global and national levels, including professionals at the UNESCO Headquarters, international experts working closely with UNESCO, officials in the Chinese Natcom, and the Director and staff in the National Committee. The interviews generated the primary source of data. Document analysis was another method used in the study in order to thoroughly examine the background and context of the ESD Project and to provide a foundation for constructing interview questions. The document analysis, additionally, served as a means to validate the interview data and information. The hermeneutic-reconstructive analysis approach (Carspecken, 1996, 2008) was employed to analyze the interview and document data collected.

Chapters 4-5 elucidate key findings and discussion of this study. Specifically,

chapter 4 depicts how UNESCO, with limited funding, strives to utilize various soft mechanisms in mainstreaming the ESD agenda, interacting with diverse actors to disseminate ESD ideas and exert influence at a distance through networks, especially in China. The chapter starts with a brief review of the development of the international ESD idea and how UNESCO mainstreamed the notion as a global agenda. It goes on to unfold the rationale for China to implement the ESD Project as well as the organizational and financial foundation of the ESD implementation in China. Particularly, the funding sources of the ESD project in China were quite diversified. However, although it is a UNESCO project, the main funding sources of the project in China came from the Ministry of Education, local governments and educational institutions, enterprises, and schools, as UNESCO offered very limited funding to the ESD Project in China. I argue that the ESD project demonstrates global educational governance in practice and then develop a preliminary discussion to examine the characteristics of global educational governance as they are manifested in the ESD project, which shed light on the research question of key features of global educational governance. The focus of the chapter is on illustrating the key mechanisms through which UNESCO interacts with ESD stakeholders (especially the Chinese ESD stakeholders) and disseminates its ESD knowledge. It demonstrates that UNESCO exerts its influence at a distance through soft, non-binding, mechanisms such as setting ESD agenda and norms and soft rules, and promoting ESD knowledge through publication, learning tools and Information and communication technologies (ICTs), capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Moreover, UNESCO excised its “unparalleled convening power” in building an international platform through international cooperation and networks. Through these soft mechanisms, UNESCO is able to exert its influence on others and play a crucial role

in the implementation of the ESD Project.

Chapter 5 focuses on the implementation of the ESD Project in Chinese education, particularly the process of the National Committee understanding the UNESCO ESD idea in the Chinese educational context, and then promoting the ESD idea to the Chinese educational practice and policy development. Such process captures the mechanisms through which an international concept such as ESD gets studied and understood by the National Committee, then piloted and localized based on national and local contexts, and finally practiced and applied in the school setting using specific strategies, which, consequently, yield changes in educational practice and policy. In the context of globalization, moreover, the promotion of the ESD Project in China not only demonstrates how an international idea was localized, but also how globalization enables the national and local actors' bottom-up participation in international knowledge exchange and policy conversations. I then connect this process with chapter 4 and unpack the roles and functions different actors (such as UNESCO, Chinese government, knowledge workers, policy elites) play in the global educational governance process, as well as the characteristics such roles embody in this form of governance.

Chapter 2 Conceptualizing Global Educational Governance

Introduction

Over the last quarter century, especially with the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, global politics have changed drastically. This was in part due to structural changes spurred by globalization, privatization/deregulation, and the advancement of new technologies that have empowered new actors in the global policy arena, creating new space and new forms of governance (Avant et al., 2010; Lewis, 2017; Lewis Steven; Sellar, 2015). The present study lies in the broad context of globalization and a new conception of governance in education. Therefore, it is essential to review the relevant literature on new forms of governance in education by which this study is situated. Large yet distinct bodies of literature have been produced to understand new forms of governance. In this chapter, however, my intent is not to discuss the broad literature of globalization or governance research. Instead, I attempt to conceptualize global educational governance (GEG) within the globalization context by connecting related sets of literature—globalization, governance and educational governance in the fields of political science, international relations, and education.

First, I briefly review the concepts of globalization and governance. This corpus provides a general theoretical context for understanding how individuals and organizations may engage in influencing and even steering educational policy and practice at a distance. Drawing mostly on the education and global governance literature, I then conceptualize the emerging theme of global educational governance with illustration on its key concepts—scales, actors, networks, power, authority, and governing mechanisms. Based on these fundamental concepts, I present a general conceptualization of global educational governance and the main propositions of the study. These key concepts of GEG build the core conceptual framework of the study,

which offers essential theoretical foundation for understanding the engagement and interaction of stakeholders in UNESCO and China in the promotion of the ESD Project in China.

Globalization and A New Conception of Governance

Globalization

Notions of globalization provide a theoretical context for scholarship on governance and especially on educational governance. A review of the conception of globalization thus provides a useful contextual background before examining extant literature on governance.

Globalization is a ubiquitous term embraced by the social system and our world. It is at the same time a highly contested term, muddled by theorists of distinct camps in the globalization debate (Held & McGrew, 2003; Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009). Held and McGrew (2003), for example, categorize the multiple camps in the globalization debate as globalists, skeptics, and transformationalists¹⁴. Acknowledging the multiple theories and understandings of globalization, I find myself more inclined to Held and McGrew's intermediate way of theorizing globalization and Rizvi and Lingard (2010)'s view of globalization as a multi-facet phenomenon. Globalization, as Held and McGrew (2002, 2003) suggest, refers to the entrenched and enduring patterns of global interconnectedness facilitated by the physical, normative, and symbolic forms of infrastructure. It signifies "the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of interregional flow

¹⁴ The *globalists* see globalization as a fundamental development that has profound influence on every aspect of our lives. Globalists such as Giddens (2000) and Friedman (2005) advocate for an idea of globalization involving a significant reconfiguration of the organizing principles of social life and world order. On the contrary, the skeptics argue that globalization is primarily an ideological construct that helps justify the neoliberal global project but has little explanatory value. Transformationalists such as Held and McGrew are the intermediary view between globalist and skeptics.

and patterns of social interaction” (Held & McGrew, 2003). Globalization, moreover, cannot be conceived as a singular condition. Rizvi and Lingard (2010)’s conceptualization of globalization as *an empirical fact, an ideology and a social imaginary* illustrates diverse aspects of the same phenomenon. Globalization, in this sense, not only refers to the scale of interconnectivity and interdependence of the people and communities at a distance, but also represents a *value orientation* and an *ideological formation* embedded in a social imaginary that is “an awareness of growing interconnectedness that has the potential for international understanding and cooperation on the one hand and reactionary politics and xenophobia on the other (in Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, pp. 24-25).”

Furthermore, globalization involves a shift in the scale of human and social organization that connects people and communities at a distance and extends the reach of power relations across the world (Held & McGrew, 2003). That is, globalization enables individuals in disparate places to experience things simultaneously, to interact and circulate ideas instantaneously, which eventually alters our perceptions of *space* and *time*. In the age of globalization, accordingly, time and space have become “compressed”(Harvey, 1989). Such a time and space compression is facilitated by new technologies (e.g., the Internet, cell phones, global media) and the ease of transportation that support instant communications, extensive global mobility and networks, flows of knowledge and information, and idea sharing across the globe (Avant et al., 2010). As a result, space as an objective phenomenon or “passive geometry” has been gradually replaced with the idea of space as “a product of cultural, social, political, and economic interactions” (Rizvi, 2009, p. 278).

As mentioned earlier, the present study focuses on the engagement and interactions of multiple actors in disparate places (e.g., UNESCO professionals and

international experts at global level, the National Committee at national and/or local levels in China). The review on the conception of globalization hence serves as the theoretical context for the study of such engagement and interaction. The engagement and interaction of different actors in the promotion of the ESD Project may be seen as a product of globalization as globalization facilitates the interconnectedness and interdependence of individuals and organizations—such as ESD stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee— and enables them to experience things in different corners of the world at the same time, and communicate and interact with each other and circulate ideas without boarder and delay. This creates room for further discussions on how the interactions between different stakeholders in the ESD Project may represent an emerging conception of governance.

A New Conception of Governance in the Globalization Era

In the 1990s, alongside the emergence of globalization, discussions of a new conception of *governance* began. To pursue a discussion on the new conception of governance in education, it is necessary to first investigate the influence of globalization on educational governance. As Dale (2007) insightfully explains, there are three interlinked sources of indirect effects of globalization on educational governance: the first is *neoliberalism*, “the ideological driving force of globalization;” the second source is the collective responses made by nation states to protect their interests through global or supranational bodies (*multilateralism* is one major response); the third source is the “*globalization of production*,” which drives the division of labor in education. As Dale (2007) demonstrates, the first source—neoliberal influence— engages the changes in the *patterns* of educational governance (decentralization, deregulation, privatization, etc.); the second source, multilateralism, expands the *scale* of educational governance by opening it to global and local actors;

the third source involves changes of both patterns and scales of educational governance.

Accordingly, with the influences of neoliberalism, multilateralism, and division of labor on education, there is a shift of patterns and scales in the ways education is governed—a shift from government bureaucratic control and state-centric model to a set of new educational governance relationships—which I describe as global educational governance. To build a conceptual basis for detailed discussions on global educational governance, I first elaborate on the general definitions of governance and global governance, and identify a research gap in the intersection of global governance and educational governance.

Definitions of governance vary substantially (Weiss, 2000). Rosenau and Czempiel (1992) offer the commonly cited understanding of the new forms of governance—“governance without government;” Governance, as they propose, refers to “activities backed by shared goals that may or may not derive from level and formally prescribed responsibilities and that do not necessarily rely on police powers to overcome defiance and attain compliance” (Rosenau & Czempiel, 1992, p. 4). Here, a contrast may be drawn between governance and government. Governance is “a system of rule that is as dependent on inter-subjective meanings as on formally sanctioned constitutions and charters”; and government is “carried out through hierarchies or specifically within administrations and by bureaucratic methods” (Ball & Junemann, 2012, pp. 3-4). Governance, in other words, encompasses governments and may be understood as the sum of many approaches and mechanisms that the public, private or non-governmental institutions, and individuals steer social systems toward their goals (Mundy, 2007; Weiss, 2000, 2016).

Rosenau later names this new concept of governance global governance and defines it as “conceived to include systems of rule at all levels of human activity—from the family to the international organization—in which the pursuit of goals through the exercise of control has transnational repercussions” (Rosenau, 1995, p. 13). Since then, a wide range of studies have been carried out by scholars in different fields of social sciences, especially in the fields of political science and international relations (e.g., Avant et al., 2010; Commission on Global Governance, 1995; Dingwerth & Pattberg, 2006; Galaz et al., 2017; Hass, 2004; Jones, 2007b; Lamb, 1996; Murphy, 2000; Padovani & Pavan, 2016; Rhodes, 2007; Rodrik, 2001; Rosenau, 2002; Schmitt, 2009; Scholte, 2003; Thomas, 2001; Vince & Hardesty, 2017; Weiss, 2000; Wilkinson, 2005; Zhu, 2016). In recent years, the concept of global governance is gaining attention and is tailored for the use of specific fields. Increasingly, studies are referring to concepts such as ‘global environmental governance’ (Conca, 2015; Gupta, Pistorius, & Vijge, 2015; Meidinger, 2017), ‘global health governance’ (Gill & Benatar, 2016), ‘global sports governance’ (Forster, 2016), ‘global financial governance’ (Ban, Seabrooke, & Freitas, 2016), ‘global educational governance’ (Lewis, 2017; Lewis, Sellar, & Lingard, 2015), and ‘global sports governance’ (Forster, 2016).

These studies on governance and global governance have influenced the way education scholars view educational governance. In the field of education, scholars observe the new forms of educational governance in distinct yet interrelated ways, e.g., decentralization and governance (Karlsen, 2000), transnational governance (Lewis et al., 2015; Lindblad & Lindblad, 2009; Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002), pluri-scalar

governance¹⁵ (Dale, 2007), network governance (Ball & Junemann, 2012), and soft governance (Lawn, 2006). Recently, several education scholars argue that the emerging theme of global governance bears considerable implications for new forms of governance in education, especially for the understanding of educational dynamics in world order or the “global architecture of education” (Jones, 2007a; Lewis, 2017; Lewis et al., 2015; Mundy, 2007; Robertson, 2012).

Overall, global governance is typically used to capture the fact that global polity is an evolving set of interactions and meanings making processes (rather than hierarchy) that includes heterogeneous actors (private, public, and non-governmental) at multiple levels (Mundy, 2007). In the fields of political science and international relations, however, there is very little research on global governance in relation to educational issues. Most of the discussions on global governance look at issues such as global economy, politics, military and security, etc. In the field of education, although attention to the new forms of educational governance has been rising, the implications of the new forms of authority in education policy remain insufficiently researched. As Mundy (2007) notes, “our debates about the educational dynamics of the world political system have remained relatively thin, both empirically and normatively” (p. 339). Therefore, there is a research gap in both global governance and educational governance literature. Through an examination of the relevant literature, in the rest of this chapter, I attempt to connect the key existing theoretical concepts of the global governance research with the educational governance research and set up a conceptual framework with key elements of the GEG.

¹⁵ Pluri-scalar governance highlights that processes of education policy and governance in one place may become increasingly entangled with and influenced by the pressure and forces emanating from multiple scales (Engel, 2007). It encapsulates the *functions* of educational governance—funding, provision, ownership, and regulation, the *scales* of educational governance—supranational, national, and local, and the broad *set of agents* in governance— international organizations, state, market, community, and household (Dale, 2007). More will be discussed later in this chapter.

Global Educational Governance: Key Concepts

The current section investigates the extant literature relevant to globalization and new forms of authority in education and presents concepts that are used to portray the new forms of governance across numerous empirical and theoretical studies on global governance and educational governance, i.e., *scales, actors, mechanisms, networks, shift of location of authority*. These fundamental elements or concepts then lead to a general conceptualization of global educational governance and hypotheses of the study.

Space of Flows across Scales

As a nation state experiences the above-mentioned effects of globalization on governance, it may change its governing strategy and mechanisms in different ways, yielding space for a new conception of educational governance. According to Castells (2008), there are three major ways a nation state can “transform itself” in coping with challenges brought by globalization (p. 87): *first*, nation states form networks of states by collaborating with each other, e.g., the European Union and the Association of Southern Asian Nations known as ASEAN; *second*, nation states may create “an increasingly dense network of international institutions and supranational organizations to deal with global issues” such as the UN, World Bank, UNESCO, etc. (Castells, 2008, p. 87); *third*, decentralization is another mechanism the nation states may use in an effort to “increase legitimacy and/or attempt to tap other forms of cultural or political allegiance” through the devolution of power and resources to local or regional governments and agencies, as well as to NGOs and others in civil society (Castells, 2008, p. 87). Accordingly, with the influences of globalization, the concept of space is changing; the nation state opens the space of governance into multiple levels by forming regional networks of states, creating international organizations,

and local decentralization. Educational governance, inevitably, may be expected at all emerging levels of polity (Dale, 2007).

Castells (2000, 2005, 2010) envisions a new spatial logic of social practices that may dominate and shape society: the “space of flows.” He argues that our society is constructed around flows, such as flows of information, flows of knowledge, flows of capital, flows of technology, flows of interactions, flows of images, sounds and symbols (Castells, 2010). Castells distinguishes the difference between the space of flows and the space of places. He argues that “a place is a locale whose form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity” and the space of places are based on people’s daily physical environment, such as the cities like New York, Shanghai, Paris and nation states like the US, China, France (Castells, 2010). According to Castells (2010), people do still live in physical places; but supported by a circuit of electronic exchange based on technologies and ease of transportations and actors and interactions in the global world, all sorts of flows get exchanged and shared cross borders and scales. The result is a new connecting and shaping of social practices—space of flows—emerge and will continue to do so. Echoing Castells, Beech (2009) even claims that the space of flows is “the dominant spatial logic of society” as it becomes “the spatial logic of the organizations and institutions which play a strategic role in shaping social practices and social consciousness in society at large.”

Educational governance research is therefore particularly interested in exploring the space of flows among the various actors across multiple scales. A number of scholars utilize the scale concept in relation to governance (Brenner, 2001, 2004; Dale, 2007; Engel, 2007, 2009; Lewis et al., 2015; Lingard; Smith, 2003). According to these scholars, scale is not simply a metric of physical space; it is the

“product of economic, political and social activities and relationships,” where different societies may produce distinct geographical scales for “containing and enabling particular forms of social interaction” (Smith, 2003). Drawing from Brenner (2001), Engel (2007) underlines that in the context of globalization, scale does *not* follow a “Russian dolls” model, where the local fits within the national, and the national within the regional or global, etc. Rather, the term of scale is referred to as a *process* (for example, of localization, decentralization or globalization) and a socially and politically constructed concept that signifies the dynamic changes occurring “in the reconfiguration of global, supranational, national, regional, and local spaces, and the relations across them” (Engel, 2007). In their study of PISA for Schools, specifically, Lewis et al. (2015) suggest that PISA for Schools showcases the hierarchical governance, “in which vertical policy mechanisms open up horizontal spaces for new policy actors” and “creates commensurate spaces of comparison and governance,” enabling the global actors like OECD to “reach into” local school-level spaces and “directly influence local educational practices.”

Linking the concept of space and scale with governance, moreover, the pluriscalar governance of education highlights that processes of education governance in one place may become increasingly entangled with and influenced by the pressure and forces emanating from multiple levels (Engel, 2007). It may be conceived as a “fluid system of governance” that entails *interpenetration* of the national, the local, the regional, and the global, and “as a multi-perspectival domain of complex overlapping spaces with a multilevel institutional architecture and a dispersion of authority” (Rosamond, 2001, p.160; cited in Lawn & Lingard, 2002). Further, Dale (2007) develops a multidimensional diagram to suggest an emerging “functional, scalar, and sectorial division of labor of educational governance” (Figure 2-1).

The pluri-scalar governance of education encapsulates the *functions* of educational governance—funding, provision, ownership, and regulation, the *scales* of educational governance—supranational, national, and local, and the broad *set of agents* in governance—international organizations, state, market, community, and household (Dale, 2007). The pluri-scalar nature of governance reflects that educational governance may be carried out by any agent(s), either separately or in combination, at any of one or multiple levels (Dale, 2005). It also indicates that the functions or activities of governance may be fragmented across scales rather than distributed as a whole. Take the function of funding for example: instead of getting funding from one actor at certain scale, in the pluri-scalar governance, funding may come from a combination of different actors and different scales—such as state, markets, supranational organizations, and their interactions (Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1 Pluri-scalar governance of education (Dale, 2005, p.132)

SCALE OF GOVERNANCE				
SUPRA-NATIONAL				
NATIONAL				
SUBNATIONAL				
INSTITUTIONS OF CO-ORDINATION	GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES			
	FUNDING	OWNERSHIP	PROVISION	REGULATION
STATE				
MARKET				
COMMUNITY				
'FAMILY'				

The present study foregrounds the complex interactions of the ESD stakeholders across multiple scales within a multilevel institutional structure (see chapter 1 Figure 1-2). Dale (2007)'s model of pluri-scalar governance of education, to a great extent, inspires and guides the study of interactions in the ESD Project by

depicting a “fluid system of governance” in educational policy with the *complex interpenetration* of the global and the national.

Actors

Alongside the expansion of scales of governance, scholars observe the multiplicity of interactions and diversification of actors in educational governance and global governance (e.g., Avant et al., 2010; Ball, 2009; Dale, 2007; Dale & Robertson, 2002; Henry et al., 2001; Lawn, 2006; Lawn & Lingard, 2002; Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002; Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009; Posthuma & Rossi, 2017; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Robertson, 2012). These scholars have witnessed the rise of new voices and interests in the policy process. As Avant et al. (2010) state, the global policy arena is filled with a wide range of actors—IGOs, corporations, professional associations, advocacy groups, and the like—seeking to govern activities in issue areas they care about. The actors are not merely occupying global structures; they are active agents who desire new structures and rules to solve problems, change outcomes, and transform international life (Avant et al., 2010, p. 1). Avant et al. (2010) call these actors “global governors” and refer to them as “authorities who exercise power across borders for purposes of affecting policy...and thus create issues, set agendas, establish and implement rules or programs, and evaluate and/or adjudicate outcomes.” In other words, globalization not only makes national territories more open to global processes, but also generates unprecedented growth in the number of global actors such as the IGOs, international NGOs, and multilateral companies (Robertson, 2012, p. 586).

Among the numerous actors at the global scale, undoubtedly, IGOs are gaining increasing attention in education literature. A number of education studies have proved that IGOs are playing a progressively significant role in the educational governance at the global level, as well as the governance at the national and local

levels (Dingwerth & Pattberg, 2006). Through their studies, scholars stress that IGOs such as UNESCO help structure the normative understandings of the global educational development and provide assistance and instructions to the nation states (Finnemore, 1993; Hartmann, 2010; Jones, 2007a, 2007b; Jones & Coleman, 2005; McNeely, 1995; Mundy, 1998, 1999, 2007; Mundy & Ghali, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). Finnemore (1993) for example, regards UNESCO as the “teachers of norms” and shows empirically how forces external to states can shape choices about internal state structure, and as a result play an important role in state policy. Posthuma and Rossi (2017) also argue that the current challenges in the globalized economy “enhances the need for supranational governance” and demonstrate how the international organizations such as ILO make efforts to refocus their roles facing such challenges.

Other than IGOs and nation states, scholars show that “global civil society” actors, policy elites, academics and scholars, professionals, consultants, local practitioners (e.g., schools, communities, teachers) and other others appear to be increasingly active in engaging in governance at various scales (Beech, 2009; Castells, 2008; Deakin & Taylor, 2002; Katz, 2005; Lawn, 2006; Lawn & Lingard, 2002; Muetzelfeldt & Smith, 2002). Global civil society actors, according to Castells (2008), comprise several types of actors, such as the “local civil society actors” who “defend local or sectorial interests as well as specific values against or beyond the formal political process...NGOs with a global or international frame of reference in their action and goals...social movements that aim to control the process of globalization,” and “the movement of public opinion” made up of “turbulences of information in a diversified media system, and of the emergence of spontaneous, ad hoc mobilizations using horizontal, autonomous networks of communication” (pp. 85-87).

Moreover, Lawn and Lingard (2002) demonstrate that “policy elites”, or “system actors”, were the main carriers of discourse surrounding globalization, appearing to act as interpreters or translators, moving across sites, producing a powerful knowledge (p.305). Later in Lawn (2006)’s work, he extends this view of actors of governance to a wider range of actors and experts (e.g., policy elites, academics and experts, professionals, consultants, and teachers) who may be working to produce a new area of meaning and “regional imaginary” and may not even know they are playing a role in Europeanizing process of education. In this sense, these actors might be viewed as *constructing* and *transforming* meanings and identities, not just transmitting and mediating the knowledge (Lawn, 2006, p. 284).

Taken together, the preceding literature has shown that new forms of governance appear to involve a range of emerging actors. Meanwhile, it also demonstrates that these various actors appear to play important roles in educational governance across multiple scales by helping construct norms and values, produce and even transform meanings and identities, and develop and shape educational policy and practice. This is consistent with the research agenda of the present study as the purview of the ESD Project involves several distinct actors, such as UNESCO (an important IGO in education), the National Committee (with a special NGO and certain government affiliation), and the Chinese Natcom (representing the Chinese government). The existing literature on the distinct actors in the new forms of governance, therefore, can offer important theoretical and practical perspectives for the analysis of the present study by showing how IGOs (especially UNESCO) and other kinds of actors may act and play their roles in the new forms of educational governance, and the implications of their roles and activities in educational policy and practice at different scales.

Mechanisms

If the various actors at different scales are indeed influencing and steering the policy and practice of others, in what ways are they achieving this? This is an inevitable question when exploring the global educational governance framework. Accordingly, there is a need to examine the relevant studies that identified the approaches and mechanisms through which actors may govern at a distance. As global actors such as UNESCO are the focus of the present study, I pursue a review of the approaches and mechanisms the global actors—especially IGOs—may follow in their governance process.

Scholars across fields have investigated the approaches and mechanisms in governing and influencing educational policy and practice (Avant et al., 2010; Carpenter, 2007, 2010; Lewis, 2017; Lewis Steven; Sellar, 2015; Mundy, 2007; Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003; Resnik, 2006; Robertson, 2012; Rutkowski, 2007a; Tikly, 2017). In education, some scholars have focused on the macro mechanisms global actors follow to govern educational issues. Mainly, Karen Mundy (2007) demonstrates two main mechanisms that are key to global governance in education—“education for development regime” and the “standard-setting” mechanism. According to Mundy, on one hand, global actors such as IGOs played an important role in structuring a normative understanding of what educational development should be, which helps “spur the governments of the development countries to adopt program of education expansion modeled on the Western world” (Mundy, 2007, p346). On the other hand, IGOs are reinforcing a common understanding of the function of education by setting standards of educational success and producing cross-national testing, which may influence national governments to “think” about the relationship between education and economy in new ways (Mundy, 2007; Resnik, 2006). In other

fields such as political science, labor, and climate science, recent studies on International Organizations (IOs) such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and G20 also showcase how IOs are setting international standards and agenda, and build political consensus for global governance with the supranational governance and their convening power (Posthuma & Rossi, 2017; Zhu, 2016).

Robertson (2012), further, contends that “learning as (individual) development” and “competitive comparison” mechanisms have displaced “education as development” and “standard-setting” mechanisms respectively (p. 586). Examining teachers’ policy and practice by a range of global actors (e.g., OECD, UNESCO, International Labour Organization), Robertson (2012) observes that learning as (individual) development becomes an important governing mechanism through which global actors influence others by framing the “good” kinds of pedagogic practices and teacher professional development and the various kinds of learning: ongoing professional learning, self-reflection, feedback, etc. (p. 594). Looking at Mundy (2007) and Robertson (2012) together, broadly speaking, global actors structure the normative expectations of educational development, learning and individual development, and the function of education to steer and set directions for educational policy on a global scale.

At a more specific level, Avant et al (2010) and Rutkowski (2007a) tease out several approaches and constructs through which actors such as IGOs may influence educational policy at a distance, as synthesized in the following:

1. *Set agendas and create issues.* Carpenter (2010) describes the role played by leading authorities in controlling the construction of new agendas or issues in specific international issues, such as “gatekeeping.” Gatekeepers are those who have control over which issues are on or *off* the international agenda; that is, they

may have ways of “adoption” and “*non*-adoption” of certain issues on the international agenda (Carpenter, 2007, 2010).

2. *Create and “transfer” (Beech, 2006, 2009) educational knowledge* Through the educational “transfer” process, different actors may produce, mediate and promote knowledge to the international community, which can become policy knowledge that empowers the knowledgeable with the ability to influence educational policy at multiple scales (Rutkowski, 2007a).
3. *Form soft¹⁶ instruments, such as laws, rules, and standards.* Avant et al (2010) show that there are different ways rules are made by global governors, formally or informally. Rules can be formulated through strategic interaction at high-level conferences, others may be unintended consequences of decisions made for other reasons, and some rules are accepted and adopted simply on the basis of past practice, not formal decisions (Avant et al., 2010; Posthuma & Rossi, 2017). For example, UNESCO affirms a variety of conventions, declarations, recommendations, standards, and protocols in education through which the norms, agendas, and principles are constructed, e.g. Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), The Millennium Declaration (2000), etc.
4. *Implement, monitor and evaluate policy and agenda.* Implementation and enforcement of the policy agenda or rules are important activities in the governance process (Avant et al., 2010; Rutkowski, 2007a). Many international agenda and rules made by high-level government actors or international organizations are vague and broad, leaving room for actors to autonomously

¹⁶ The word soft has been used to describe forms of power, influence, and ways of governing that are distinct from hard—*binding and regulative*—forms (Kenneth W. Abbott & Snidal, 2000; Bokova, 2011; Lawn, 2006; Nye, 2004; Rutkowski, 2007a; Teng, 2010). In general, scholars use the soft metaphor to describe the *non-binding* characters of governance.

implement and promote them on the ground. In an examination on the “Education for All” movement, for example, Mundy (2010) observes how the “Education for All’s global governors” such as UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, cooperate and at the same time compete with their own resources and advantages, which can have positive and negative impacts on governing outcomes. The implementation processes of international policy and agenda often involve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In fact, in some organizations, monitoring and evaluation is a crucial part of standard procedures in the policy and project implementation cycle. For example, World Bank sets “evaluation” as the last step of its project cycle for implementing each of its projects (World Bank, 2013).

Despite the fact that these scholars illustrate the mechanisms in governing global educational issues from different angles, the aforementioned approaches and mechanisms offer valuable insights for analyzing the approaches and mechanisms UNESCO may follow in the promotion and governance of the ESD Project.

Additionally, a number of scholars extend the soft metaphor and characterize the new form of governance as *soft governance* with an exploration of “policy-making upon practices, procedures and conventions that have no binding character as to their implementation” (Ahonen, 2001; Lawn, 2006). Ahonen (2001) also lays out a range of approaches that are non-binding, and may represent a new soft governance mode, e.g., expert exchange, unilateral secondment of experts, observatories, advisory committees and working groups, information networks, consultation of stakeholders, information exchange, work of consortia in framework programs, conferences, seminars, colloquia, round tables, symposia, research, development, education and training, and monitoring. These approaches of soft governance overlap with Avant et al (2010) and Rutkowski (2007a)’s constructs discussed earlier. Depending on the

situation, global actors such as IGOs utilize a range of *non-binding* approaches to softly govern educational issues worldwide.

Networks and Network Governance

Currently,

We see networks everywhere we look—military organizations, social movements, business formations, migration patterns, communications systems, physiological structure, linguistic relations, neural transmitters and even personal relationships (Hardt and Negri, 2004, in Davies, 2011)

In a variety of fields (e.g., education, sociology, and political science), discussions of networks and network governance are emerging as an essential theme in understanding the new concept of governance. The following is *not* an attempt to review every aspect of the literature in detail, as it is extensive. Instead, it presents a brief review of the emerging discussions on networks and network governance, which provide critical insights for the conceptual framework of GEG.

Increasingly, networks have become the key word in the work of many scholars. Castells (2010), notably, envisions the world as a “network society” with an open, dynamic structure that consists of nodes (or actors)¹⁷ and ties (or relationships)¹⁸, which are labeled as the “space of flows”. Networks, according to Carpenter (2007), are a “communicative structure” characterized by reciprocal and voluntary patterns of communication and interaction. They are also a way of thinking about social systems that focus our attention on the relationships among the entities that make up the system (Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013). Interactions in the networks are “behaviors with respect to others and often observable by third parties”

¹⁷ Nodes and actors are the central “units”; they can be individuals, families, communities, organizations, nation states, or any other entity that can form or maintain formal (e.g., legal, economic) or informal (friendship, gossip) relationships (Ball & Junemann, 2012; Pescosolido, 2006).

¹⁸ Ties or relationships are network connections among actors or nodes and thus serve as the basic founding blocks of networks (Pescosolido, 2006).

(Borgatti et al., 2013, p. 4). Borgatti et al. (2013, p. 4) distinguish interactions with flows in networks and state

flows are the outcomes of interactions, and interactions form the medium that enables things to flow; and flows may be intangibles, such as beliefs, attitudes, norms, and so on, that are passed from person to person. They can also consist of physical resources such as money or goods.

Generally, networks can be seen in terms of plural *actors* or *nodes* engaged in a reflexive process that enables interactions and results in “flows” (Newman, 2001, p. 108; Rhodes, 1996).

Some scholars distinguish the different networks in international development (Carpenter, 2007; Keck & Sikkink, 1998, 1999; Reinicke, Deng, & Martin, 2000; Stone, 2005). Stone (2005), especially, categorizes three types of networks: *global public policy networks*, *transnational advocacy networks*, and *knowledge networks*. *Global public policy networks* are “insiders,” delivering global public goods and international development. They are composed of actors from diverse sectors, such as nation states, international organizations, civil society and the cooperate sector actors (Stone, 2005). *Transnational advocacy networks* refer to a set of actors “working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and a dense exchange of information and services” (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 2). Transnational advocacy networks incorporate a range of actors, such as the NGOs, IGOs, governments, and “myriad individuals located within these bureaucracies and other levers of symbolic power in world affairs, including academia and the media” (Carpenter, 2010, p. 206). *Knowledge networks* are “a system of coordinated research, study (and often graduate-level teaching), results dissemination and publication, intellectual exchange, and financing across national boundaries” (Parmar 2002, in Stone, 2005, p. 91). Knowledge networks generally

consist of professional bodies, research groups, and scientific communities and are “essential” for global exchange and creation of knowledge and norms (Stone, 2005).

As the becomes more networked, scholars realized that networks and governance are inherently interrelated (Padovani & Pavan, 2016; Parker, 2007). Connecting networks with governance, Parker (2007) suggests that in order to become a form of governance, networks must play a role in “*steering, setting directions and influencing behavior*”¹⁹ (p. 115). In addressing governance issues in the global policy arena, a number of scholars highlight the significance of global networks (including online networks) in governing global public policy. By investigating the UN Vision Project on global public policy networks, for example, Reinicke et al. (2000) observe that the global public policy networks and its major actors execute six core functions in influencing global public policies: (1) Establish a global policy agenda and offer mechanisms for developing a global public discourse to debate that agenda; (2) Facilitate processes for negotiating and setting global standards; (3) Develop and disseminate knowledge; (4) Create and deepen markets; (5) Design innovative implementation mechanisms; (6) Address the participatory gap by creating inclusive processes that build trust and social capital in the global public space (p. 27). Additionally, Keck and Sikkink (1999) and Carpenter (2007, 2010) examine the role of transnational advocacy networks in steering global agendas. They found that transnational advocacy networks influence a variety of domains, e.g., agenda setting, discursive positions of the states and IGOs (through lobbying and persuasion), institutional procedures and policy changes, and state behavior.

¹⁹ Parker (2007) identifies several characteristics of network arrangements that are fundamental for governance objectives to be satisfied—the networks’ “density (direct or indirect linkages between all nodes)”, “breadth (incorporation of full range of innovation institutions)” and “association with values such as trust, mutuality and shared identity” (p. 115).

Over last two decades, in conceptualizing the new forms of governance *in* and *through* networks, a number of scholars have developed the concepts of “network governance” or “networked governance” (e.g., Ball, 2008, 2010; Bogason, 2006; Bogason & Zølner, 2007; Castells, 2008; Coen & Thatcher, 2007; Davies, 2011; Rhodes, 1996, 1997; Torfing, 2005). Among the influential network governance scholars, there are several well-known schools: the “Anglo-Governance School” (e.g., Bevir and Rhodes (2010); Rhodes (1996); Stoker (2011)), Danish “Democratic Anchorage” School (e.g., Agger, Sorensen, and Torfing (2008); Bogason (2006); Bogason and Zølner (2007); Torfing (2005)), and the Dutch “Network Management” School (e.g., Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997). Although these schools have distinct concerns and are influenced by different theoretical traditions, they are more or less closely aligned on fundamental issues. For example, each school sees networks as “an increasingly important medium of political association” (Davies, 2011, p. 12) and view network governance as “a hybrid organizational form” that integrates a variety of “inter-dependent” yet autonomous actors in concrete communications and negotiations based on a common understanding through factors such as norms, regulation and perceptions (Bogason & Zølner, 2007, p. 5). It is worth emphasizing that rather than reviewing all the network governance theories and traditions, I intend to draw useful information from the network governance research including studies by these schools and relate it with governance research in education.

Understandings of network governance have been evolving over the past two decades. Bevir and Rhodes (2010) summarize three waves of network governance analysis. The “first-wave” network analysis, according to Bevir and Rhodes (2010), typically treats network governance as “a hollowed-out state” and posits the fading of state power with the massive growth of the network (p. 83). The “second wave” of

network governance reintroduces the state as “the orchestrator of ‘metagovernance’” or “the governance of government and governance”(Jessop, 2003) and acknowledges the shift from hierarchy and bureaucracy to markets and networks, or “from command and control through bureaucracy to the indirect steering of relatively autonomous stakeholders¹” (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 82). Bevir and Rhodes (2010) later provide a reflexive critique of the two waves of network analysis²⁰ and pronounce the current “third-wave” network analysis of “decentered governance”, which challenges the ideas of network governance resulting in “a hollowed-out state” and there are “inexorable”, “impersonal” forces driving a shift from government to network governance (p. 82). Governance, instead, is “constructed differently by many actors working against the background of diverse traditions”; and to *decentre* means to focus on “the social construction of a practice through the ability of individuals to create, and act on, meanings” (Bevir and Rhodes, 2010, p. 82). Drawing from the three waves of network governance, there is not a particular account or theory of governance, and the diverse constructions of several traditions of networks are only *one* among many governance approaches (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 98).

Increasingly, education scholars adapt ideas from the evolving understandings of networks and network governance research in other fields and explore the network governance in education (e.g., Ball, 2008, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012; Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011; Gunter, 2012; Nóvoa & Lawn, 2002). Stephen Ball (2012), particularly, portrays networks as a “descriptive and analytic term” and a

²⁰ Stoker (2011), moreover, reflects on the critiques of the early network governance analysis and asserts that “the first flaw in the governance thinking offered by Rhodes and Stoker is this failure to fully recognize the value of hard power...Rhodes...thought that the skills of diplomacy, communication and bargaining would be enough in achieving co-ordination. But this overlooked the importance of hard power in terms of coercion and strong material incentives. Our second mistake was not to fully recognize the limited amounts of soft power available to local government” (p. 28).

“conceptual device” that refers to “a form of governance that interweaves and interrelates markets and hierarchies” and a method for representing social relations in educational policy (Ball, 2008, p. 749). Foregrounding networks in international education policy, Ball and Junemann (2012) describe how the policy networks at multiple scales and sectors function in educational governance and strongly proclaim that “policy networks do constitute a new form of governance, albeit not in a single and coherence form” (p. 136). They demonstrate that certain business and social networks provide access and advocacy “opportunities” for one to engage in educational policy; and different “positions” and “appointments” of actors offer a set of links and connections that can be used for distinct purposes (Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 80). Moreover, Ball and Junemann (2012) demonstrate that social events such as meetings and other encounters are points of intersection between distinct social fields and positions, opening up space for social interactions and relationships to be developed; and the various social events also offer space for consolidating and strengthening “trust” among actors (Ball & Junemann, 2012, pp. 80-84).

Along with the rising attention on networks and network governance, some scholars such as Davies (2011) argue for a critical rethinking of the network governance and network analysis. In his recent book *Challenging Governance Theory: From networks to hegemony*, Davies (2011) reviews the network governance theory and practice, and highlights the empirical basis for a critique of network governance theory. Employing Gramsci’s concept of hegemony²¹, Davies (2011) argues that the promotion of networks can be understood as “a dimension of neoliberal hegemonic strategy, part of the regulative, cultural work of producing ideal neo-liberal subjects”

²¹ Comprehensive hegemony is the “additional power that accrues to a dominant group in virtue of its capacity to lead society in a direction that not only serves the dominant group’s interest but is also perceived by subordinate groups as serving a more general interest” (Arrighi, 2005, p32; as cited in Davies, 2011, p. 103).

(p. 101). Such a dimension of neoliberal hegemonic strategy takes place on the terrain of the integral state²², the dialectic relations of coercion-consent enacted in the daily politics of institutions such as networks (Davies, 2011, p. 151). He attempts to draw attention to the reproduction and contestation of power and the manner in which alliances formed around common interests as well as resource interdependencies strengthen asymmetric power relations (Davies, 2011, p.152). He highlights that networks can behave like hierarchies—hierarchies based on networking; and networks of like-minded actors are more likely to produce exclusion than inclusion (Davies, 2011).

Despite critiques of the network governance analysis, some scholars are still quite optimistic about network governance, such as Padovani and Pavan (2016), Ball (2012), Gilchrist (2009), and Hickey and Mohan (2004). The optimists focus on the explanatory value and outcomes of network governance, or they are normatively inclined towards network governance, see network governance as “a normative framework through which genuine collaboration or co-governance can be built” (in Davies, 2011, p 51). They link network to an empowerment process that creates “enormous opportunities for redefining and deepening meanings of democracy, for linking civil society and government reforms in new ways, for extending the rights of inclusive citizenship” (in Davies, 2011, p 52), affirming the “transformative”(Hickey and Mohan, 2004) reflexive human action.

All in all, as governance scholarship reflects on conceptions of network governance and develops new and diverse understandings of networks and network governance, one proposition is valid—there is a shift from government (through

²² According to Gramsci (1971), “State = political society + civil society, in other words hegemony protected by the armour of coercion” (p. 262), where political society refers to the coercive and hard power of the state (Davies, 2011, p. 105).

direct, bureaucratic control) to governance (through steering, coordinating, and networking with multiple actors); and network governance becomes an increasingly important form of governance. However, the extent to which government's authority and control has shifted to networks is still a question to be answered. Positioning myself in between the critics and optimists of network governance, I acknowledge that networks may be both *enabling* (and even empowering) and *constraining*. I tend to agree that interactions and networks among multiple scales and actors plays a vital role in and provides space for governance; but networks are not the only space where multiple actors exercise their agency and steer at a distance. Bureaucratic and hierarchical control of certain actors may still be fundamental governing mechanisms.

Despite the increasing attention in network governance research, some scholars realize that much of the existing network governance literature is concerned mainly with the structures of network governance rather than its *hows* and *whys* (Ball and Junemann, 2012, p.5). In other words, there is a need to explore questions such as how do networks govern in the field of education? And why can networks govern? The present study seeks to contribute to the network governance literature by exploring the diverse actors in the network governance in educational policy and practice (especially the ESD policy and practice), and how these actors may play a role in steering and setting directions of educational policy and practice. The existing network governance and network research thus serves as an indispensable component of the conceptual framework for analyzing the networks among stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee.

Shift of the Location of Authority

A shift from government to governance will involve a shift of authority from nation-state government direct control to diverse sources of authority. Examining the

literature on the shift of authority and different bases of authority in new forms of governance highlights *how* and *why* the diverse actors—particularly the IGOs—may govern and steer in the new governance structure. Following Barnett and Finnemore (2004) and Avant et al. (2010), I define authority as the ability of one actor to deploy discursive and institutional resources and induce deference in others. Thus, authority is “a social construction” and may be seen as “an attribute generated from social relations” (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004, p. 162). In other words, one cannot have authority in a vacuum; authority is created by the recognition of others (Avant et al., 2010, pp. 9-10). Recognizing an authority requires some level of consent from other actors; “an actor may be powerful regardless of what others think, but she is only authoritative if others recognize her as such” (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004, p. 171).

Moreover, the new forms of governance, to varying degrees, shift nation states’ control and authority over education to other supranational and subnational actors. In presenting the shift of authority in educational governance, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) define three modes of decentralization— *democratic devolution*, *functional decentralization*, and *fiscal decentralization*—and illustrate the shift of authority within modes. Applying Rizvi and Lingard (2010, p. 123) understandings of decentralization at a global level demonstrate more about the “diffusion” of authority and control (Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 136) or the “rescaling of statehood” (Brenner, 2004) in educational governance. Situating it in the broad global context, the *democratic* form of educational governance involves authority shifts from national governments to supranational and/or subnational, local communities with goals of democracy, equality and the public interests. This form of educational governance gives autonomy and authority to a variety of actors other than national governments, and opens room for international organizations, civil society, and intellectuals to act

on educational governance in public interests. Within the functional form of governance, in the name of promoting social efficiency, the various agencies, public, private, or non-profit, enjoy increased flexibility in managing certain issues; “but these nonetheless have to conform to the performance goals and targets set by the central government” (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, p.121). *Fiscal* form of governance typifies the control over funding sources to global or local institutions. In such ways, “a new modality of state power, agency and social action” may be formed (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, p.121). Some scholars point out that the nation states have changed their governance strategy and become the “coordinator of coordination” (Dale, 2004). This is not “hollowing out” the state, but “the judicious mixing of market, hierarchy and networks to achieve the best possible outcomes” (in Ball, 2008, p. 748).

Among the various non-state actors, international organizations enjoy certain authority over international policy and become important actors in governance (Barnett & Duvall, 2005a; Weiss, 2016). Based on Weber (1958, 1978)’s theories on bureaucracy and legitimate authority, Barnett and Finnemore (2004, p. 28) argue that international organizations are “conferred authority by many actors for reasons owing to their rational-legal standing, their delegated tasks, their moral position, and their expertise.” Further, Barnett and Finnemore (2004) and Avant et al. (2010, pp. 11-14) portray multiple types of authority²³, which contribute in distinct ways to making international organizations autonomous actors in global governance. In this study, I draw on these two typologies and illustrate four bases of authority for actors

²³ Barnett and Finnemore (2004) portray four types of authority—*rational-legal*, *delegated*, *moral*, and *expert*. Modeled on Barnett and Finnemore (2004)’s typology, Avant et al. (2010, pp. 11-14) propose five bases of authority for global governors—*institutional*, *delegated*, *expert*, *principled*, and *capacity-based* authority. The two typologies overlap greatly.

(especially IGOs) in governance—*institutional, delegated, expert, and moral* authority.²⁴

Institutional authority derives from performing “duties of office” in rationally established organizational structure and norms (Avant et al., 2010, p. 11). For example, the Director-General of UNESCO or the heads of the Chinese Natcom and the National Committee obtain authority from their legal positions in these organizations. Such authority, however, is rationally and legally “defined and limited” by the rules and purposes of the organization that authorizes them (Avant et al., 2010). *Delegated authority* is “authority on loan from some other set of authoritative actors” (Avant et al., 2010). The nature of delegation may vary. Nation states, for example, may delegate to international organizations, NGOs, and other agencies, the tasks they cannot perform by themselves or tasks with which they may have limited knowledge and resources.

Institutional and delegated authority has both rational and legal bases however, these are not the only bases for authority in governance. Global actors may also embody *expert* and *moral authority*. *Expert authority* is based on professionals with detailed and specialized knowledge or capacity. The authority is therefore inherent in the professional actors (Avant et al., 2010). For example, professionals and experts in UNESCO and the National Committee in the ESD Project may be recognized as experts with certain knowledge and capabilities to tackle issues in ESD field and thus enjoy expert authority in dealing with ESD. The global actors may embody *moral authority* legitimated by widely a shared set of principles, morals, or values, which may be used as a basis for authoritative action (Avant et al., 2010). For example, universal access to education, human rights, peace, and sustainability are commonly

²⁴ These bases of authority may overlap to some extent and may be coupled in use.

used authorizing principles and values for actors, such as the UN and UNESCO, seeking to govern globally (Avant et al., 2010).

Studies have shown that despite the fact that nation states still have the authority and control over educational issues, the authority and control in governance is diffused and relocated to a variety of actors, resulting in the “rescaling of statehood” (Brenner, 2004). Among the various actors, scholars pay special attention to the authority of IGOs as they emerge as significant players in global politics. The multiple types of authority discussed in this section provide a theoretical basis for treating IGOs and other actors as “autonomous actors” in governance (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004, p.3). More importantly, the discussion on authority sets the stage for examining and explaining *how* and *why* UNESCO as an IGO in education and the National Committee may govern in the case of the ESD Project.

Conceptualizing Global Educational Governance

As Bevir and Rhodes (2010) point out, there is no one single comprehensive theory to understand governance. Indeed, it is extremely difficult to define global educational governance, or GEG, by its key features. In this section, I do not offer a single conception of GEG. Instead, by building upon the above-mentioned key components, I attempt to depict a general sketch of the conceptualization of GEG to help investigate if certain activities may represent the GEG structure.

As discussed, due to the various effects of globalization, the patterns and scales in which education is governed have evolved “from government to governance” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 117). The dimension of educational governance is expanding at the global, regional, national, and local levels. Educational governance emerges as a *global educational governance* structure—the patterns of a range of actors (institutional and individual) at multiple scales (global, supranational, national,

subnational, and local scales) exercising their agency, steering, influencing, and setting the directions of educational issues at a distance through hard and/or soft mechanisms.

Specifically, GEG is “not a solo act;” it encompasses governments, involving a variety of public, private, and non-profit actors at various levels, such as governmental entities, international/regional organizations, subnational/local actors, and individuals (Dale, 2004; Lawn, 2002; Lewis, 2017; Lindblad, Johannesson, & Simola, 2002; Meidinger, 2017; Raab, 1994; Zhu, 2016). It involves a wide range of hard and soft approaches and mechanisms through which actors may communicate, interact, and negotiate educational issues. Moreover, GEG does not hollow out the state; but rather it is the rescaling of nation states’ influence that involves a decentering of state authority from government hierarchical authority to a judicious combination of hierarchy, networks, markets, and organizations with different bases of authority, i.e., institutional, delegated, expert, and moral authority.

GEG rests, to a great extent, in interactions among diverse actors at multiple scales, rather than on a certain actor or entity. In other words, GEG does *not* refer to a central authority or any specific political entity that can exercise control and authority over others. Nation states are no longer the exclusive site of educational governance. Although hierarchical and bureaucratic structure is still important, GEG mainly exists “in the interstices of formal operations, in the immaterial world...shaped by the opportunities and fears of globalization”(Lawn & Lingard, 2002), and resides in the *interactive* space of flows (Castell, 2010) of the global, the national, and the local.

The key conceptualizations of GEG examined above foreground the fundamental constructs of GEG and set the conceptual ground for future analysis and interpretations of the following main propositions of this study:

First, the engagement and interaction of UNESCO in the ESD Project may steer and govern ESD policies and practice at global, national, and local levels, and therefore is instantiation of the emerging global educational governance structure.

Second, UNESCO engages itself and interacts with actors in the ESD Project through a range of governance mechanisms, particularly through soft approaches such as agenda and issue setting, making soft rules and norms, and creating and disseminating knowledge of society, etc.

Third, as the pluri-scalar governance framework suggested, functions or activities of governance (e.g., funding, ownership, and policy development, knowledge dissemination) are fragmented across scales, resulting in the interpenetration of the global, national, and local. In the case of the ESD Project, the interaction across the various stakeholders may create an *interactive space of flows*, through which governance of the ESD Project may encompass governments, involving a variety of actors at multiple levels. Diverse actors—e.g., UNESCO, the National Committee, China, and individuals—have different functions and play distinct roles in the process.

Summary

In this section, I investigated three bodies of literature that are of great relevance to this study—globalization, governance, and educational governance. Drawing on the overall review of the notions on globalization and governance, I set the general theoretical context for examining how engagement and interaction of distant actors are made possible due to the time and space compression and interconnectedness of globalization. I contend that the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of policies and global society pose common challenges for

governing issues around the globe, resulting in shift from government to new forms of governance that shape policy and practice at a distance.

Moreover, based on an in-depth review of research on global governance and educational governance, I lay out the fundamental concepts and the general conception of global educational governance, that are relevant to this study, which build the conceptual framework for the analysis and interpretation of the interactions between UNESCO and the National Committee. To set the stage for further analysis and interpretation, the following chapter will present the methodological design and procedures used to collect and analyze data.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods

This chapter presents the methodological design and methods of the present study. In order to capture the engagement and interaction of diverse actors in the promotion of the ESD Project in China and unpack it in the framework of global educational governance, I believe that a qualitative research approach is appropriate as it highlights the understanding of the underlying themes of values, meanings, and action orientations of social actors within the broad social structural conditions (Carspecken, 1996). The methodological design and methods of the study, therefore, bring together the qualitative research approach with an understanding of global educational governance as a pattern of dynamic and interactive mechanisms sustained by interactions of actors at multiple scales. In the following, I present the methodological design of the study and the methods undertaken to collect the data, and explain the rationale and procedure of utilizing the hermeneutic-reconstructive analysis to process and analyze the data.

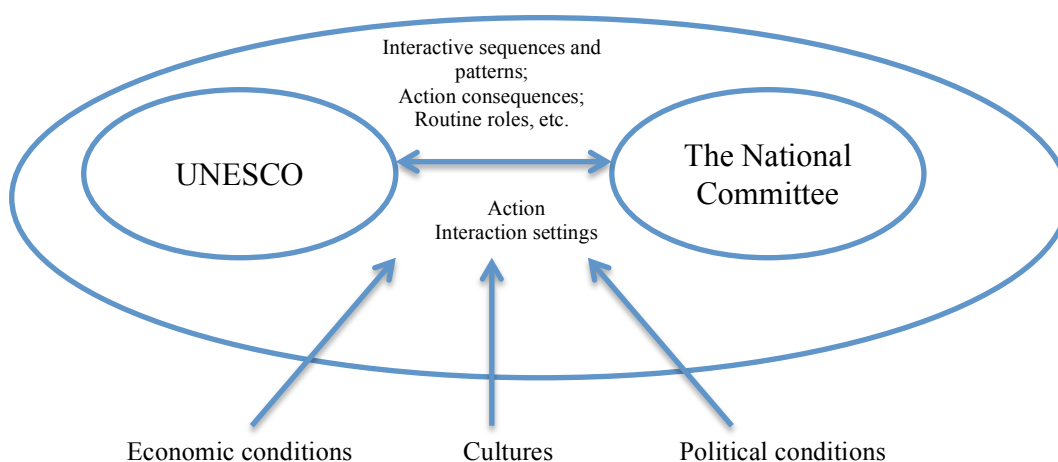
Methodological Design

The critical qualitative research approach highlighted by Phil Carspecken (1996) sheds light on, both theoretically and empirically, the methodological design and the data collection processes of this study. Rooted in Habermas' Communicative Action Theory, Carspecken (1996)'s theory of meaning and the three ontological realms—the objective, subjective, and normative-evaluative realms—perceive research and knowledge not simply as representation of the “reality” or “facts” but rather as a normative and social phenomenon, “having substantive-constitutive relations to personal identities, social practices, institutions, and power structures.”

To this end, three principal items are investigated in this study: *social action*, *subjective experience*, and *conditions of action* (Carspecken, 1996). Special attention

is paid to understanding the social structure, culture, interactive sequences and patterns, action consequences (intended and unintended), roles, power, and human agency involved in the engagement and interaction of UNESCO and the National Committee in the process of promoting the ESD Project in China (see Figure 3-1). In particular, economic, social, and political conditions, as well as norms, values, and other dynamics enable and/or constrain actions and interactions of actors in society. Therefore, attention to the conditions of action or contexts of interactions is obligatory for understanding the objective, subjective, and normative-evaluative claims of the research participants and generating trustworthy knowledge, as actors are strongly influenced by economic, political, and cultural structures of the society in which they are acting.

Figure 3-1 Relevant research items of the study



The study examines an international educational policy from the GEG perspective. The critical qualitative research design of the study is thus informed by an approach to examine educational policy that defines “policy as practice” with policy being broadly conceived as “a complex social practice, an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and

institutional contexts” (Sutton and Levinson, 2001, p. 1). Even though policy most often takes the form of language, or text, this study attempts to put this form into motion and analyze it as one reified instance of a broad chain of sociocultural practice (Levinson, Sutton, & Winstead, 2009). ESD is an overarching theme in both national and international education policy and has been codified in official and unofficial documents, publications, international agreements, and conferences. The UNESCO ESD Project as an international policy may be seen as a fundamentally normative discourse that occupies very different social spaces and scales. Bridging the understanding of policy as practice with the critical qualitative research approach allows us to examine the ways individuals and groups engage in situated behaviors that are both constrained and enabled by existing structures, but which allow the person to exercise agency in emerging situations (Sutton & Levinson, 2001).

The UNESCO ESD Project is multilevel or pluri-scale in nature (see Figure 1-2 in chapter 1). The interactions between UNESCO and the National Committee, accordingly, need to be viewed as part and parcel of larger structures, forces, and social interactions. This study incorporates the multilevel research perspective to avoid incomplete and unbalanced perspectives and better understand how actors at different scales are interacting, enabling, and constraining each other (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Bray & Thomas, 1995; Levinson et al., 2009; Monkman & Baird, 2002; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, 2009). The multilevel research perspective allows the researcher to recognize that national or local understandings and social interactions should not be considered demographically or geographically bounded at certain scales. It offers the researcher a means to situating the social action, subjective experience and conditions of UNESCO and the National Committee within a broader cultural, historical, and political investigation.

Methods

Aligned with the research questions and methodological design, this dissertation employs two major qualitative methods— document analysis and interviews—to investigate the social action, subjective experience, and conditions of actions of the ESD stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee. The two primary research sites are the National Committee in Beijing, China and the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. The Chinese Natcom²⁵ in Beijing serves as a secondary research site to provide historical and contemporary contexts and conditions of actions for examining the ESD Project. During my field trips, I spent two to three months in each of the three research sites.

The field trips in the National Committee (Beijing, China; August 2011, May to June 2012), UNESCO Headquarters (Paris, France; June to August 2012), and Chinese Natcom (Beijing, China; May to August 2011) generated a wide range of document and interview data for the present study. A preliminary document analysis was carried out with the data collected from my first field trip in May-August 2011 at the National Committee and the Chinese Natcom. Based on the preliminary document analysis, I developed the research questions and interview protocols for the study. To ensure the appropriateness of the interview data collection process, I obtained the IRB approval through the Indiana University Human Subjects Office on April 23, 2012. In the subsequent field trips in 2012 and 2013, I conducted interviews and collected more valuable data for the study. In addition, follow-up contacts and data collection were made during my visits to China in 2013 (February to March 2013; April to May 2013). During these visits, I also participated in various ESD conferences and

²⁵ For information on Chinese Natcom and National Committee, please refer to Sections on UNOPS and China and the UNESCO ESD Project in China in chapter 1.

workshops, which provided me opportunities to enrich the document data and conduct interviews with stakeholders from all over the world with less travel costs. A number of the interview responses were quite relevant to the study and thus used in the finding and analysis chapters of this dissertation.

Through my field trips in Beijing and Paris, moreover, I established trusting relationships with the officials and staff in the National Committee, the Chinese Natcom, and the UNESCO Headquarters. Since then, I have been corresponding with the key stakeholders in these three organizations on a regular basis via emails and online media (e.g., Skype, QQ and We Chat²⁶), which served as a means of following up and understanding the on-going interactions among the stakeholders. More document and interview data was collected in 2013 and 2014. Since I had established trust and relationships with the interviewees, to save time and resources, some interviews were arranged using online media. To this day, I remain in close contact with these key stakeholders and receive updates and documents from them on the ESD Project, which provide me up-to-date data and perspective on the project.

Documents

Documents play a significant role in this study. As Guba and Lincoln (1981) note, documents are “a stable, rich, and rewarding resource,” and can “provide a base from which any subsequent inquirers can work and thus lend stability to further inquiry” (p. 232). Besides, research participants in interviews may “provide an account from their perspective which many include distorted or magnified perception of their role in relation to a particular policy (Taylor, Rizvi, Lindgard, & Henry, 1997, p. 42). For this reason, it is important to access as many accounts and sources as

²⁶ QQ and We Chat are online chatting programs that have similar functions as Skype and Whatsapp. They are both popular programs in China.

possible in order to move towards as complete a picture as possible. Documents, in other words, help supplement the interview data.

A wide range of documents were gathered in three research sites, including publications, unpublished internal documents, meeting minutes, records of activities, policy documents, budgets, legal imperatives, and any relevant documents available at each research site, including the correspondence of stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee, e.g., emails, letters, faxes ect. The dates of the documents ranged from the establishment of UNESCO (1945) to present. Below is a list of documents collected for the study:

1. Documents with public access: publications (both English and Chinese), reports, declarations and statements, conference records, promotion and advocacy tools (in the forms of documents, audio, or video), speeches, consensus, etc.
2. Unpublished internal documents:
 - Internal reports: annual reports, reports to superior, peers, partners, etc.
 - Organizational records: minutes and voice records of the meetings, budgets, memos, briefings, lists of partners etc.
 - Presentations and speeches by policy makers, professionals, and experts, etc.
 - Other internal documents: policy briefs, petitions, proposals, etc.
3. Communication records: fax, official or unofficial letters, corresponding emails, conversations, and presentations from conferences and meetings, etc. In this study, following the APA style, e-mail communications from individuals are cited as personal communications, i.e., (pseudo name, personal communication, date of correspondence). I use footnotes to specify the texts are between two or multiple individuals.

Interviews

Table 3-1 gives information on the interviews, i.e., the number of interviews at each site level, interviewee type, place of interview, and method of interview.

Interviews for this study include both semi-structured interviews and some unstructured interviews. I conducted a total of 18 interviews with 13 subjects. The subjects were selected based on their status and titles, their experience, type of work they do in the organization, etc. The population of the interviews was diverse, covering subjects working at the international level and national level. Among the 13 interviewees, there were high-level UNESCO officials actively engaged in the work of ESD for decades, core experts who promoted ESD on a global scale from the beginning of the ESD Project, high-rank officials from the Ministry of Education in China, and founders and main actors in the National Committee. The diverse and high profile interviewees ensured the coverage of data from multiple perspectives.

At the international level, key ESD stakeholders working in and with UNESCO were interviewed, including experienced professionals who worked extensively in the UNESCO ESD Section²⁷ and senior experts who work closely with UNESCO. One of the interviewees—Cao— started to work on ESD at the international, national, and local levels in the 1960s and is considered by himself and some other interviewees in the study as one of the “fathers” of ESD (Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013; Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Considerable portions of these interviews were administered at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, as it was the core coordinating entity of the UN Decade for ESD. These interviews emphasized the work of UNESCO professionals and

²⁷ As of August 2012, there were about 7 full-time professionals in the ESD Section at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. I selected 2 professionals who had worked the longest (over 20 years) in the ESD field. Both interviewees had worked with or in UNESCO for a long period of time.

associated experts, their communication and interactions with the National Committee and other relevant actors in China, the development of the ESD discourse, and their perceptions on the influence of promoting ESD on the educational practice of nation states such as China (see a sample interview protocol in Appendix 5).

At the national level, I arranged interviews with the important stakeholders in the National Committee. Interviews with leaders and staff of the National Committee focused on the implementation of the UNESCO ESD Project in Chinese education, their work in the organization, how they interacted with UNESCO and promoted ESD in China, their perceptions on ESD ideas and practice, and the influence of the ESD Project (see a sample interview protocol in Appendix 2). One interviewee from the National Commission—Sun— was a founding member and key leader of the ESD project in China. During the data collection process in Beijing, I selected diverse interviewees to provide insights on the ESD work in China. As interviews went on, Sun was a major actor who made great contributions to promoting the ESD project in China and a key informant that can provide a broader picture and more in-depth insights on the project than other interviewees. Acknowledging other interviewees' insights on the project, I interviewed Sun multiple times and kept email and phone correspondences with him over the process of data collection and analysis.

In addition, interviews were conducted with UNESCO professionals working closely with China and Chinese secondees to UNESCO, as well as officials in the Chinese Natcom (Ministry of Education). These subjects had extensive knowledge and experience in working with UNESCO and China. Through interviews, I gained an in-depth understanding on how UNESCO and China interacted with each other, how their interaction and relationship evolved overtime, and how UNESCO and the Chinese government may play a role in promoting UNESCO projects such as the ESD

Project (see a sample interview protocol in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

The distinct interviewees provided diverse perspectives and understandings on engagement of ESD stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee in promoting the ESD ideas and practice in China and internationally, how they interacted to promote the ESD Project in China and what such interactions may represent. Most of the interviewees were of high status and information-rich. Moreover, the identities of all subjects are kept anonymous. Names of the interviewees used in the study are *pseudo names* assigned by the researcher. The pseudo names are all Chinese family names for consistency *regardless of the interviewee's nationalities*. In this dissertation, text quotes from interviews are cited as (pseudo name, personal communication, date of interview).

Table 3-1 Information on the Interviews

Site level	Interviewee type	Place	Name	Interview Date	Type of interview
International level <i>Total: 8</i>	Professionals and experts working in or closely with the ESD work in UNESCO	Paris	Li	July 31, 2012	Semi-structured
		Beijing	Ren	April 29, 2013	Semi-structured
		Beijing	Cao	May 1, 2013	Semi-structured
	Officials at UNESCO (Headquarters) in connection with China	Paris	Da	July 19, 2012	Informal
		Paris	Yu	August 7, 2012	Informal
		Paris	Lang	August 10, 2012	Informal
		Paris	Yu	August 14, 2012	Semi-structured; follow-up interview

		Paris	Ma	August 17, 2012	Semi-structured
National level <i>Total:</i> <i>10</i>	Executive Director, staff, and experts in relation to the National Committee	Beijing	Wu	May 9, 2012	Informal
		Beijing	Feng	May 8, 2012	Semi-structured
		Beijing	Wang	May 31, 2012	Informal
		Jakarta	Sun	June 9, 2012	Informal
		Beijing	Sun	February 28, 2013	Semi-structured; follow-up interview
		Beijing	Sun	April 29, 2013	Semi-structured; follow-up interview
		Beijing	Sun	May 7, 2013	Semi-structured; follow-up interview
		Internet	Sun	March 8, 2014	Semi-structured; follow-up interview
	Officials in the Chinese Natcom	Internet	Yang	May 11, 2012	Semi-structured
		Internet	Hu	April 30, 2012	Semi-structured

Interview protocols were developed prior to interviews based on the specific research questions proposed earlier in the section. Because the interviewees were in different sites and positions, I drafted one main interview protocol for each site and then prepared one revised protocol for each interviewee. The interview protocols covered a selection of questions illustrated in Appendices 2-5. Leadoff or stimulus

questions were designed to open up a topic domain that I wished to cover in interviews. Possible follow-up questions were jotted down in the interview protocols. All the interviews were open-ended “in that respondent can answer in whatever way and to whatever extent they wish and in that there is some interaction with the interviewer who may probe, extend questions, or raise new topics” (Schensul, 2008). As a result, the interviews were constructed as the conversation unfolded, allowing maximum flexibility during the interview process. As I proceeded to the interviews, I strived to provide appropriate responses and play the roles of a catalyst eliciting responses, of a listener, and of a companion. All in all, I sought to create an atmosphere of openness, comfort and trust. When possible, interviews were conducted face to face, with several interviews being conducted online. Interviews were done in the language of choice of the research participants, either English or Chinese.

Additionally, all semi-structured interviews and part of the unstructured interviews were audiotaped. Semi-structured interview sessions usually lasted between 1 to 2.5 hours with participants having the opportunity to discontinue interviews at any time. Furthermore, some unplanned unstructured interviews, however, were not audiotaped since they were spontaneous and carried out during breaks, meetings, flights, and other work or leisure time. In the case of the non-audiotaped interviews, notes were taken during and after. Although unstructured interviews were loosely structured, questions discussed in interviews fell in the topic domains designed in the protocols.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data captures the reasoning and deliberation process behind the institutional actions and reveals their political, institutional, and social contexts and is

this dissertation's "meat." A high proportion of the material collected through qualitative methods is text based, consisting of verbatim transcriptions of interviews and discussions, field notes, and other documents (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002). Moreover, the contents of the material are "usually in detailed and micro form (e.g. accounts of experiences, descriptions of interchanges, observations of interactions, etc.)" (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002, p. 176).

The qualitative data collected was analyzed through the hermeneutic-reconstructive analysis (Carspecken, 1996, 2008), a powerful approach to interpretive inquiry that enabled the researcher to dig into the values and action orientations of social actors in their social, political, and cultural contexts and further unpack interaction patterns, power relations, meanings, roles, and structures from the data. The data analysis was reconstructive in the sense that it articulated "those cultural themes and system factors that are not observable and that are usually unarticulated by the actors themselves" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 42). The reconstructive analysis "takes conditions of action constructed by people on nondiscursive levels of awareness and reconstructs theme linguistically" (Carspecken, 1996, p. 42).

The first step of the reconstructive analysis was to compile the primary data and record. In other words, the document and interview data, field notes and memos were sorted out for analysis. In particular, each audiotaped interview was purposefully transcribed by the researcher. I viewed the transcribing process as a reflexive and sociocultural process in taking the position of the interviewees and understanding their experience as well as an effective step in generating insights on coding and analysis of the data. Skukauskaitė (2012) states that reflexivity in transcribing could provide a basis for warranting research claims in ways that are accountable both to the

research participants and to the research community. The interviews were transcribed into the original language of use—some in English and others in Chinese.

Once the data was compiled and sorted out, I started the reconstructive analysis process. This process of coding and analysis started as I finished the first sets of interviews and document collection from my field trips in 2011 and 2012. The data coding and analysis process was facilitated by the powerful coding functions of the NVivo and Dedoose software. In the reconstructive analysis, I was able to reconstruct the social and narrative “horizons”(Gadamer, 1982)²⁸ from the data and explored the relationship between the horizon and the research participant’s narratives. In particular, I utilized two interrelated methods of analysis to interpret the “horizon” within which the research subjects make sense of their actions and ideas.

I first conducted a “meaning field” analysis that is a set of possible meanings that the research subjects intend to convey in their narratives. People cannot know for certain what one’s meaning is with his/her act or expression; but as researchers, we can specify “a range of possibilities” (Carspecken, 1996, p. 96). I then proceeded with the pragmatic horizon analysis. In this analysis, I investigated and reconstructed the multiple levels of meaning (foregrounded, intermediated, and backgrounded meanings) conveyed in the subjects’ narratives (Carspecken, 1996). The possible meanings in the meaning field analysis served as the foregrounded meanings. I then wrote down the intermediated and backgrounded meanings of the narratives and attempted to reconstruct the horizons of the subjects based on this work. Through the two analytical methods, I attempted to examine the interaction patterns, contexts,

²⁸ Horizons are meaningful worlds one lives within, the “range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point... ‘to have an horizon’ means not being limited to what is nearby, but to being able to see beyond it” (Gadamer, 1982).

roles, interactive sequences, values, norms, and other items that are critical to the study (Carspecken, 1996).

With the aid of the qualitative data analysis software, I was able to apply an iterative coding process to the qualitative data. Raw codes were first created based on research questions, literature review, and my impression of the data; then, a preliminary coding system was developed by organizing the raw codes and identifying the common themes emerging in the data. This preliminary coding system was then refined as I read, analyzed, and enriched the document and interview data. During this process, I made annotations in the transcripts and records and wrote preliminary data analysis memos as I coded manually. I took down key expressions of the interviewees and underlined points that were connected to my research questions or that could be placed somewhere in the theoretical frameworks. Periodically (after coding every two or three transcripts and records), I detached myself from the codes and examined the logical consistency and potential relationships within the coding system. This provided me opportunities to organize my thoughts and refine the coding system, as well as moments of reflection and theoretical thinking. Through the reconstructive analysis and iterative coding process, main findings could be generated.

The next step was then aimed at conceptualizing the social structure and system relations, and explaining and understanding the findings in light of the existing theories (Carspecken, 1996). Close attention was paid to the different kinds of conditions of action (e.g., economic, political, cultural, and environmental), the interests²⁹ of the subjects, the categories, distinctions, metaphors, power relationships, implicit frames the subjects used in their reasoning, the resources and constraints of their interactive actions, etc. Metaphors the interviewees used, such as “hands and

²⁹ According to Giddens (1979), an interest is a socially constructed means to fulfill needs or desires.

feet”, “chew” and “feed”, “fallen princess” and “new rich”, were highlighted and analyzed in this process. I also generated a multi-level code tree, linked the main codes with the theoretical framework, and therefore theorized the findings during the analysis process.

Summary

The methodological design of the study generally followed Phil Carspecken’s critical qualitative research approach and was also informed by an approach to study educational policy as practice as well as the multilevel research perspective, which allowed me to situate the study within the broader global, national and local contexts. In this chapter, I also illustrated the rationale for generating data from qualitative interviews and the collection of documents and provided an overview of the data collection process. Moreover, I justified the rationale the reconstructive analysis approach and laid out the steps of coding and analyzing the data with this selected method.

In the following chapters, I draw on the interview and document data to present the main findings and analysis of the study.

Chapter 4 UNESCO: Governing Softly at a Distance

Introduction

In previous chapters, I laid out the groundwork for this study, introduced the conceptual framework of global educational governance (GEG) for in-depth discussions and analysis, and presented the methodological design and methods used in this study. As previously discussed, the main interests of this work includes presenting UNESCO engagement in the ESD Project, examining the promotion of the ESD Project³⁰ in China, and exploring the following overarching research questions:

1. How did UNESCO engage itself and exert influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China?
2. To what extent and how was the UNESCO ESD Project promoted in China at the national level through the collaboration between UNESCO and Chinese stakeholders?
3. How and to what extent did UNESCO and the relevant Chinese actors govern educational policy and practice in the case of ESD in China?
4. How and to what extent does the process of promoting the UNESCO ESD ideas in China appear to represent features of emerging global educational governance?

Focusing on these questions, I present and discuss main findings generated from the interview data and document analysis in chapters 4 and 5: *Chapter 4* works to draw the boundaries of the case and depict a story about how and in what manner UNESCO engages itself and interacts with Chinese stakeholders, and utilizes various

³⁰ As pointed out in Chapter 1, in this dissertation the UNESCO Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development Project and the UNDESD together are acknowledged as the UNESCO ESD Project.

mechanisms to exert its influence softly at a distance. *Chapter 5* highlights how the international ESD concept was understood and implemented in Chinese educational practice and policy through the promotion of the ESD Project in China.

In the current chapter, I first briefly review the development of the UNESCO ESD idea, focusing on how the ESD agenda was developed and set by the UN and UNESCO, including its organizational foundation and funding sources. I then discuss this from the global educational governance perspective and argue that the promotion of ESD project is an instantiation of global educational governance in practice. This discussion sets the stage for exploring UNESCO's approaches for engaging in the ESD Project and how said project illustrates the features of global educational governance. In particular, I demonstrate that UNESCO seems to interact with other actors and steer at a distance through a range of mechanisms, particularly through the soft mechanisms, such as setting agenda and norms, knowledge creation and promotion, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and international cooperation and networking. Through the discussions, I put the case in the lens of global educational governance and use that as the foundation to unpack some characteristics of global educational governance or GEG in action.

The Promotion of the ESD Project: An Instantiation of GEG

In this section, I delineate the historical development of the ESD project. The historical overview is necessary as there has been no historical analysis of the ESD project so far and thus, without a historical overview, we do not know why the project was created and for what purpose. Also, reviewing the historical development of ESD will help answer the theoretical questions regarding how goals of the project were established and in what sense the project can reflect the mechanisms of GEG. Further,

the historical account provides support for the following discussion on framing global discourse and utilizing networks to govern education globally.

A Brief History of the ESD Project

After WWII, along with the rapid modernization and industrialization process, severe environmental pollution and damage occurred around the world in the 1950s and 1960s, drawing policy makers and scholars' attention to environmental issues. In June 1972, in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, education was first incorporated officially in the declaration as an “essential” principal to raise public awareness of environmental issues (United Nations, 1972a, 1972b). Environmental Education emerged as a preferred solution. Since then, as a specialized UN agency on educational issues, UNESCO has been actively practicing and emphasizing the importance of reconciling environment and development (UNESCO, 2005a).

By the late 1970s, the Environmental Education discourse emerged as a generalized global concern. With the help of a series of UNESCO conferences and projects, it gained support from major global environmental organizations (Bromley, Meyer, & Ramirez, 2011). However, there was a growing realization in nation states and international organizations that “it is impossible to separate economic development issues from environment issues” and there was a tension between unequal economic development across nation states and environmental problems (United Nations, 1987). As a response to this, UN convened a special commission – the World Commission on Environment and Development— in 1983, which led to a groundbreaking report—Our Common Future—in 1987. The report acknowledged Sustainable Development as a “global agenda for change” and offered the widely cited and referred to definition of Sustainable Development: “development that meets

the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987).

Five years after the issue of *Our Common Future*, the UN Conference on Environment and Development was launched in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (United Nations, 1997). The UN Conference on Environment and Development adopted a worldwide influential blueprint for sustainable development with 40 chapters—*Agenda 21*. Specifically, Chapter 36 of *Agenda 21* explicitly endorsed education as a critical component “for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues” (United Nations, 1992). UNESCO served as the UN system focal point for Chapter 35 and Chapter 36 of *Agenda 21*, which focused on science for sustainable development and promoting public awareness and education for sustainability respectively.

In 1994, UNESCO launched the Environment, Population and Sustainable Development Project to operate as a central element of its strategy in achieving the goals of *Agenda 21* (Lee & Huang, 2009; UNESCONews, 1997). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the worldwide rising attention on the sustainable development agenda and the adoption of the ESD Project caused an inevitable shift of understandings on education for environmental and sustainability issues (Bonnett, 1999; Sauvé, 1996; Wals & Kieft, 2010). In particular, as Environmental Education broadened to contain development and social components, debates on Environmental Education and ESD emerged between Environmental Education and ESD supporters³¹ (International Union for Conservation of Nature Commission on Education and Communication, 2000; Iyengar & Bajaj, 2011; Jickling & Wals, 2007). According to

³¹ Scholars argued for distinct methods of perceiving the Environmental Education-ESD relationship, in the 1999 ESD debate; three methods emerged: (1) Environmental Education equals ESD; (2) Environmental Education is a part of ESD; and (3) Environmental Education and ESD have elements in common but are distinct.

Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013), an influential expert in the field of ESD, leaders of the ESD Project believed that “education for a sustainable future has to address not just the environment...ESD is not science or geography, history, or Environmental Education, but every discipline and subject can contribute.” Gradually, through the implementation of the Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development (EPD) project and international debates on the relationship between Environmental Education and ESD, the Environmental Education discourse shifted more toward ESD.

The UNESCO ESD Project, notably, helped mainstream the global agenda of education for sustainable development and set the direction of international ESD development (UNESCO, 2005a). In December 2002, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the initiation of United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD or UN Decade of ESD) spanning from 2005 to 2014 (Resolution 57/254). UNESCO was designated as the lead agency of the UN Decade of ESD. The UN Decade of ESD highlights that ESD embodies the social, environmental, and economic dimensions and mainstreams the relation between ESD and Environmental Education by officially declaring that ESD “encompasses environmental education,” “setting ESD in the broader context of socio-cultural factors and the socio-political issues of equity, poverty, democracy and quality of life” (UNESCO, 2005c, 2006a). Aligned with Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, ESD reaffirms that it “is critical for promoting sustainable development” (United Nations General Assembly, 2005) and the vision of ESD³² is “a world where everyone has the

³² Specifically, ESD is designed to enable citizens to acquire various skills, such as critical thinking, communication, problem solving and conflict management strategies, and project assessment. These ESD skills are essential for citizens to “take an active part in and contribute to the life of society, be respectful of the Earth and life in all its diversity, and be committed to promoting democracy in a society without exclusion and where peace prevails” (UNESCO, 2005a). To achieve such a vision, the

opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation” (UNESCO, 2006a, p. 24).

In 2014, upon the end of the UN Decade of ESD, the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD was adopted to scale-up ESD and to accelerate progress towards sustainable development (UNESCO, 2014). On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly formally approved the universal and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (United Nations, 2015). To align with the 2030 Agenda, the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD sets its goal to contribute and advance substantially to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2018a).

The Organizational and Financial Foundation

This broad vision of ESD cannot be achieved by one organization in a short time. Instead, it requires IGOs, national governments, and other partners such as civil society networks, the private sector, and media to cooperate and work together (this will be discussed in depth later in this chapter and also in chapter 5). To better coordinate various stakeholders and promote the UN Decade of ESD at a global scale, based on the organizational foundation of the UNESCO Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development Project, UNESCO designated a unit under its Education Sector—the ESD Section³³—to act as the Secretariat of UN Decade of ESD in its Headquarters in Paris (UNESCO, 2007a). The ESD Section also acts as an interface

ESD agenda is framed with *four major thrusts*—promoting and improving quality education; reorienting existing education programs; developing public understanding and awareness; and providing training (UNESCO, 2005c).

³³ In the ESD section, there are a number of sub-sections, such as publication and awareness, teacher education, Monitoring and Evaluation, budget, climate change education, Disaster and Risk Reduction, and biodiversity (UNESCO, 2010b). As of March 2014, there are nine full-time professionals in the ESD Section at the UNESCO Headquarters, four of which are permanent UNESCO employees and five are sponsored by the nation states, such as the Sweden, Germany, and Japan.

of various ESD groups and networks, UNESCO National Commissions, Bureaus for Education, Field Offices and institutes (UNESCO, 2009b).

At the UNESCO level, the ESD Project is funded with diverse sources, including UNESCO's regular budget and extra-budgetary funding, such as the Japanese Funds-in-Trust. Every year since the start of the ESD, Japanese Funds-in-Trust provides funding to support the ESD work at UNESCO Headquarters and field offices. A large portion of this funding is devoted to research and publication, conferences and workshops, projects in regions and member states, as well as the daily administration of the project (UNESCO Bangkok, 20 January, 2006). In addition, there are several extra-budgetary sources from UNESCO member states, enterprises, and international organizations, such as the government of Germany and Sweden, Samsung, UNICEF, and the Prince Al-Walid Bin Talal Foundation.

UNESCO, however, does *not* act as an aid agency in funding international ideas such as the ESD idea (Li, personal communication, July 31, 2012; Lang, personal communication, August 10, 2012; Hu, personal communication, April 30, 2012). As UNESCO has been embroiled in financial crisis and political turmoil, it lacks the financial and human resources to engage itself deeply in all the member states (as argued in chapter 1). This funding situation has influenced the ESD Project; and the issue of limited budget is confirmed by interviews with a number of UNESCO officials and experts of the National Committee (Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013; Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013; Sun, personal communication, April 29, 2013). With their budgetary issues, UNESCO has limited funds to most nation states and entities implementing the ESD work at national or local levels.

In China, the Secretary-General of Chinese Natcom and other officials and experts had a meeting on setting up the ESD Project in 1998. With “too few staff”³⁴ (Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012) in Beijing, the Chinese Natcom lacks human resources in conducting specific projects at national and local levels. The Chinese Natcom, thus, consulted the Dean of the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences at the time and agreed on entrusting the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences in coordinating the UNESCO ESD Project in China. Considering that Gendong Shi had rich experience in conducting another UNESCO project—the *Joint Innovative Project on Raising the Achievement Level of Primary Schools Project*—in China, Du³⁵ and the Dean of Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences appointed Shi as the main focal point of the ESD Project in China (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2002a, 2003). The National Committee and local committees were established in China to implement the UNESCO ESD Project in China. Consequently, a multi-level organizational structure with diverse actors was set up in promoting the ESD work in China (details were discussed in chapter 1).

The amount of funding from UNESCO consists of a very small portion of the budget of ESD Project in China. According to Sun (personal communication, March 8, 2014), a key implementer of the ESD Project in China, the project’s operation cost in China is on average around USD 170,000 to 200,000 per year; UNESCO’s contribution to its operation cost is around 5 percent each year. Both Sun (personal communication, March 8, 2014) and Wu (personal communication, May 9, 2012) described UNESCO’s funding to the project as the “fishing money (Diao Yu Qiao; 钓鱼钱)

³⁴ As of August 2012, there is less than 15 full-time staff working in the Secretariat of the Chinese Natcom in the Ministry of Education in Beijing. As the main entity responsible for coordinating and overseeing the UNESCO work in all of China, the human resources in the Chinese Natcom are quite limited.

³⁵ The person in charge of the project in the Chinese Natcom has been Yue Du, who was the chief of the Education sector at the time and is currently the Secretary-General of the Chinese Natcom.

鱼钱),” a small amount of money people use to get others to invest more in it, or to “fish” and see if there will be others funding it. Consequently, the funding sources of the ESD Project in China are quite diversified. With limited funding from UNESCO, the funding sources of the ESD Project in China come mainly from the Chinese Natcom, local governments and educational institutions, enterprises, and schools (G. Shi & Han, 2012). Therefore, the ESD Project in China is set up with a multi-level and multi-actor organizational foundation, which provides broad access to international organizations, governments, NGOs, and the private sector.

Global Educational Governance in Action

According to the framework proposed in chapter 2, global educational governance (GEG), refers to the patterns of a range of actors (institutional and individual) at multiple scales (from global to local) exercising their agency, steering, influencing and setting directions of educational issues at a distance through hard and soft mechanisms. GEG is revealed in practice, discourse, and organizational forms.

In the case of implementing the ESD Project in China, these actors encompass the Chinese government, covering a wide range of actors, such as IGOs at the global scale (i.e., UNESCO), governmental entity at national scale (i.e., Chinese Natcom), and subnational/local actors (e.g., the National Committee and NGOs), and individual policy elites (e.g., Shi and Hopkins) (this will be discussed further in chapter 5). Through the work of these actors, the UNESCO ESD Project in China facilitates interactions and exchange on educational policies and practices between the global and the national/local, which enables national and local actors to engage directly in global practice and become active actors within the global space of education (more will be discussed later). This phenomenon can be perceived as part of a broader set of initiatives that expands the influence of international organizations like UNESCO in

educational governance, opening up possibilities for international ideas and policies to play a part in national and local policy making and practice, exceeding the traditional role and influence of national governments in educational governance. Such a process of promoting the ESD Project in China, as a result, appears to be an instantiation of the new form of governance structure—global educational governance.

The next question, then, is what are the important features of GEG in the case of the ESD Project, particularly its implementation in China? In the following three sections, I touch upon the key research questions on how UNESCO engaged itself and exerted influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China, how UNESCO governs educational policy and practice in the ESD case, and how the process of promoting the UNESCO ESD ideas in China appear to represent features of emerging global educational governance. Specifically, I pursue a preliminary discussion from the following aspects—the formulation of a global ESD agenda, promoting knowledge and building capacity, and the creation of “space of flows” and key nodes in network governance. Also, based on the discussions, a more in-depth examination will be presented in chapter 5.

Globalizing ESD Discourse: Agenda, Norms, and Rules

Among the multiple approaches that UNESCO employed to promote the ESD idea, setting agenda, norms, and rules are foremost. Using its global influence, UNESCO has successfully made the discourse of ESD known by the world, from national policy leaders, to NGOs, local educators, and eventually parents and students. In this section, I delineate the strategies that UNESCO used to globalize ESD discourse from the following three aspects: setting an agenda, forming norms and soft rules, as well as serving as a platform for the negotiations about the rules and norms.

Setting the ESD Agenda

In the ESD project, agenda setting is a fundamental moment in the emergence of this new idea on a global scale as it moves the ESD discourse from a nascent state to political salience. As Carpenter has pointed out (2010), the adoption of a new agenda in many cases is a prerequisite for the development of policy and knowledge that may lead to new international norms and practice. In the case of ESD, the UN and UNESCO played key roles in the adoption and legitimatization of the ESD agenda, which precipitated the development of policy and knowledge in this area. These two international organizations adopted the ESD agenda through consensus building activities among nation states, NGOs, and other actors. Furthermore, the affirmation of the ESD agenda also allows UNESCO to enrich the international education development agenda through a variety of resolutions, conventions, and declarations (UNESCO, 2005a).

During this process, what stays *on* and *off* the ESD agenda depends on the interactions and negotiations among various actors with different interests. For example, the relationship between quality education and ESD is underscored in the UN Decade of ESD policy documents, international consensus, and declarations (Beijing Consensus, 2011; UNESCO, 2009a, 2010e). It raises quality education, rather than performance-based education or multilingual education or another education agenda, as a priority of the ESD agenda worldwide (Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013; Wang, personal communication, May 31, 2012). UNESCO's role in keeping specific issues on the ESD agenda echoes with Carpenter (2007, 2010)'s observations on "gatekeeping"³⁶ as a "powerful form of global

³⁶As shown in chapter 2, "gatekeeping" refers to the leading authorities in controlling the construction of new agendas or issues in some specific international issues (Carpenter, 2010).

governance.” In this case, UNESCO has the influence to keep issues *on* or *off* the international ESD agenda, which essentially constitutes governance at the global level (more will be discussed in the end of next section).

Forming Norms and Soft Rules

In chapter 2, I reviewed several ways that norms and soft³⁷ rules might be constructed globally. For example, norms and rules may be formed through strategic interaction at high-level conferences; some rules may be unintended consequences of decisions taken for other reasons; and some norms and rules may become accepted and adopted simply on the basis of past practice, not formal decisions, etc. (Avant et al (2010, p. 15). These are all observed in UNESCO’s promotion of the ESD Project. As UNESCO has limited funding and does not have the “hard” power to bind and regulate the policies and activities of its member states, in practice, UNESCO normally works to set norms and non-binding, or soft, rules using a variety of methods, such as consensus and international agreements (e.g., declarations and recommendations) at high-level conferences, policies (e.g., UNDESD Resolution), publications based on best practices (e.g., reports, frameworks and guidelines), etc. At high-level conferences, UNESCO affirms policies and agreements on ESD through which norms, agendas, and standards are constructed. For example, the outcome document of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in Bonn, Germany in 2009 (hereafter the Bonn Conference)— Bonn Declaration—highlights that quality education should be an integral part of ESD and “education *should be* of a quality that provides the values, knowledge, skills and

³⁷ The word soft has been used to describe the forms of power, influence, and ways of governing that are distinct from these “hard”—*binding and regulative*—forms (Kenneth W. Abbott & Snidal, 2000; Ahonen, 2001; Lawn, 2006; Nye, 2004; Rutkowski, 2007a). In general, scholars use the soft metaphor to describe the *non-binding* nature of things.

competencies for sustainable living and participation in society and decent work” (UNESCO, 2009a, 2010e), which sets a direction for the development of the UN Decade of ESD (or DESD) worldwide. Developed and adopted by high-level government officials in many countries and other influential non-governmental and private stakeholders, this international agreement provides plausible guidelines for countries to follow at policy and practice levels to implement the ESD work (UNESCO, 2009a, 2010e).

Furthermore, norms and soft rules may be constructed through ESD policies, publications, as well as on the basis of what is considered successful practice. The ESD policies, such as the UNDESD Resolution, the UN Decade of ESD International Implementation Scheme, and UNESCO Action Plan for the UN Decade of ESD, provide policy guidelines for various stakeholders to understand and implement the ESD idea. Moreover, UNESCO’s UN Decade of ESD Monitoring and Evaluation reports and other publications on ESD cases are vital resources for ESD stakeholders to learn the global progress of the UN Decade of ESD and successful experiences and the challenges of ESD work around the world. In these policies and publications, UNESCO holds “the big vision” that ESD is a catalyst for “setting a new direction for education and learning for all” and “reorienting and questioning the existing education and underlying values and ethics and purpose of education,” as highlighted in the interview with Cao, one of the founding experts in the field of ESD (personal communication, May 1, 2013). Such a vision also calls on ESD to reorient “teaching”, “curriculum”, “the new learning” and “professional development” towards a sustainable future (McKeown, Hopkins, Rizzi, & Chrystalbridge, 2002; UNESCO, 2005b, 2009a, 2010d, 2012d).

Take the UN Decade of ESD 2012 *Monitoring and Evaluation report—Shaping the Education of Tomorrow* as an example. The 2012 report sheds light on the position of the UNESCO ESD Project in “shaping” the way education and learning are envisioned globally, nationally, and locally. In this 2012 report and other influential UNESCO publications and policy documents, UNESCO envisions and advocates that ESD needs to support an education that *should* “empower and equip” people “with the capacities to transform themselves and others, bearing in mind the well-being of the Planet” (UNESCO, 2012d, p. 7). As a result of such a vision, UNESCO has advocated for a wide range of approaches to education and learning for a sustainable future³⁸. By providing policy guidelines and defining what is considered “successful” in ESD implementation, consequently, UNESCO constructs norms and rules regulating how ESD should be and that and certain ways of implementing ESD are *successful* or *good*.

As Roberston (2012) observes, global actors are influencing and governing others by framing the “good” kinds of pedagogic practices and teacher professional development and the various kinds of learning: ongoing professional learning, self-reflection, feedback, etc. (p. 594). Put this in the context of the ESD Project in China, by fostering certain norms and soft rules through approaches such as publications, UNESCO gradually starts influencing the norms and the way education and learning are envisioned in Chinese education. Drawing heavily from UN and UNESCO documents regarding sustainable development and ESD, for example, some important Chinese policymakers and scholars realized that “education should be future-oriented”, “education must be in line with and serve social changes,” and it is

³⁸ For example, ESD-related curriculum development (UNESCO, 2010d), ESD student-centered pedagogies (UNESCO, 2012a), reorienting teacher education (UNESCO, 2005b), “systems thinking-based learning, values-based learning, problem-based learning, critical thinking-based learning and social learning”, etc. (UNESCO, 2009a, 2012d)

fundamental to cooperate with various stakeholders and reorient teaching through learning, curriculum, and professional development towards a sustainable future (L. Liu, 2011, 2012; G. Shi, 2010a, 2010b, 2012; G. Shi & Han, June, 2012; L. Shi, 2010b). Moreover, the ESD idea has become relevant and helpful in discussing topics such as “what kind of educational development do we want to achieve in China?” and “how should we develop education”(L. Shi, 2011, p. 3). By discussing such questions, the National Committee uses the UNESCO ESD idea and Chinese ESD practice to generate normative claims such as “an important function of education in new period *should* be serving for sustainable development” (G. Shi, 2008). These normative claims formulate this kind of education and learning as *good* in Chinese education, which may eventually form all norms in Chinese education.

In summary, by adopting the global ESD agenda, UNESCO legitimizes the ESD idea successfully. Through its policy documents, implementation frameworks and successful cases, UNESCO advocates for certain modes of education as “*good*” and “*successful*” which leads to norms and rules that are designed to ensure the implementation of the ESD agenda. Furthermore, UNESCO’s norms and soft rules may influence the overall norms and the formulation of how education and learning is envisioned at a distance, such as in China. That is, UNESCO utilizes one of its vital mechanisms—agenda and norm setting—and acts as an agenda and norm setter in the governance of the ESD Project. Such mechanisms of agenda and norm setting, together with knowledge promotion and capacity building, help frame a global ESD discourse and constitutes, which are essential features of global educational governance in this case of ESD, which I will have a in-depth discussion and the end of the next section.

Western Ideas, Global Negotiation

As highlighted in chapter 2 of this study, globalization represents a *value orientation* and an *ideological formation* embedded in a social imaginary of interconnectedness (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The findings of this chapter showcase that in the context of an interconnected world, the ESD discourse formed its own value orientation and ideological principles. It originated in the civil society of western countries such as the US and Canada, but after being adopted and advocated by UNESCO, the ESD ideas went through a series of global negotiation. Historically, when environmentalism was first instigated in western civil societies, it showed strong connections with the field of education. One of the interviewees who was involved in the creation of such ideas and discourse globally, Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013), explained the intrinsic connection between the environmentalist movement in the 1960s and the introduction of environmental discourse into the domain of education:

In the 1960s, I was a schoolteacher, teaching nature study in a residential school in Canada. I had a license to trap the birds and students can observe the birds heart-beating and things like that. That was teaching. And then I came to the idea that we needed to not just teach in the nature but teach for the nature. So outdoor education kind of splits into two camps. There was one group split away from outdoor education and called themselves Environmental Educators. The idea of it was not just teach in nature but teach for nature.

Although environmentalism gained momentum in its development in western countries and successfully made itself part of UNESCO's agenda, when people in the western countries tried to promote environmental education globally, they still encountered challenges. There was strong tension between the need for economic development among developing countries and the discourse of environmentalism. Through negotiation and reconciliation, people of different nations agreed upon the use of the term "sustainable development." "Sustainable development" was then

written in UNESCO Declarations, action plans, and reports. Thus, the birth of a widely accepted discourse of sustainable development and later on education for sustainable development was a result of western initiation and global negotiation. Western actors took the lead in the formulation of the discourse, whereas they did not have an absolute authority in this process. Developing countries were able to assert their needs and opinions and significantly shifted the connotation of the term.

Ideological formation is an important part of the global education governance. In examining different roles that actors of global governance play, scholars noted that carriers of discourses of globalization include not only policy elites and system actors, but also a wider range of actors such as academics, teachers, and consultants. In addition to transmitting knowledge across different geographic locations, these actors also construct and transform meanings and identities (Law & Lingard, 2002; Law, 2006). As a consequence, they very often unintentionally contribute to a process of Europeanizing education (Law, 2006).

The above discussion sheds light on the case of the ESD project. For instance, in the discursive formation process of core ESD ideas, multiple actors were engaged and non-conventional actors of governance, such as experts, consultants, academics, and teachers, played active roles. In particular, UNESCO's international experts such as Cao, exerted trans-local and trans-regional influences through volunteering himself in UNESCO's implementation of the ESD project. Their roles were not limited to carrying the message of ESD from one place to another. Instead, as the example of the evolution from environmental education to education for sustainable development has shown, UNESCO international experts became key negotiators with global stakeholders when its agenda was called into question. Meanwhile, through introducing ideas originated in western civil societies to UNESCO and global

educators, the ESD international experts could not escape their western perspective either, and unintentionally contributed to Europeanizing education (Interview with Charles, May 1st, 2013). In this sense, UNESCO provided a platform on which different ESD actors formed subtle power relationships. Actors from the western world undoubtedly still were in a leading position in setting agendas and formulating the soft rules and norms, whereas non-western actors could use this platform to voice their diverging opinions (Interview with Charles, May 1st, 2013). The consensus formation mechanism in UNESCO embodied this imbalanced power relationship but also made it possible—if only to a certain degree—to challenge existing power structures.

In terms of soft governance, previous literature has put much emphasis on the non-binding characteristic of policy implementation (Ahonen, 2001; Lawn, 2006). The case of the ESD project has shown that soft governance actually can go beyond the implementation of soft rules and soft norms to encompass the agenda setting and policy formation process. This process was soft in the sense that the ESD agenda was not fixed in the first place but was a result of negotiations of multiple players. Not only the actors within the conventional governing framework, such as policy makers and IGO officials, had the right to speak, but also content experts, volunteers, NGOs, etc. Thus, we understand the discourse or ideology of ESD can be flexible in nature.

Although there is a negotiation space in ESD discourse formation, we cannot ignore the sophisticated power relationship that remains as well. The undeniable leading role that western actors played invites further examinations about the globalization of ESD discourse. What I have observed from the implementation of ESD, although local and national actors were given considerable autonomy in implementing the project in different areas and, more specifically, in interpreting and

localizing ESD discourse, western players still steered the project at the transnational level. The transnational actors influenced national and local ESD practice using multiple mechanisms, such as publishing authoritative publications, capacity building, and employing data-driven strategies to monitor and evaluate the project, as well as knowledge promotion, capacity building and networks formation (which will be discussed later in this chapter). Opportunities for the non-western players to be at the center of the ESD transnational platform were still yet to be created.

This situation is particularly pertinent for Chinese ESD actors. As China rose as an important player on the international and transnational platforms, it naturally sought to exert more influence on global educational governance. However, historically speaking, China is a non-western country and was, for a long time, at a marginalized position in the western-led, multi-lateral world order. At the discursive level, examining the ESD project in China means, on the one hand, to look at the localization of the ESD discourse in China, and on the other, to explore whether there is a complete loop created for Chinese actors to give feedback and assert their voices at the transnational and international levels. This chapter has set the stage for the investigation of these issues by delineating an overview of the discursive evolution of global ESD discourse. In chapter 5, I will continue this line of discussion by looking at the Chinese actors' localization and interpretation efforts of ESD discourse, as well as their efforts to impact transnational discursive reformulation of ESD.

Promoting Knowledge and Building Capacity

In the UN Decade of ESD (or DESD) International Implementation Scheme, UNESCO (2005c) develops a series of specific strategies to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the ESD Project internationally. For example, it encourages actors across sectors to cooperate to affirm ESD as a priority and incorporate it into

national SD plans and national education plans; support ESD with policy, mandates, and other frameworks; raise ESD awareness and understanding through these measures (UNESCO, 2005c). In practice, a prerequisite for the employing such strategies involves the promotion of ESD knowledge and capacity building..

Promoting ESD Knowledge through Advocacy

Production of ESD publications and generalized learning tools

Production of publications is an essential approach for UNESCO to share ESD knowledge and good practices with member states and other ESD stakeholders (UNESCO, 20 July, 2011, 2007a). Since the Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development Project, UNESCO prepared various publications based on extensive research, such as key implementation plans (e.g., the UN Decade of ESD International Implementation Scheme and UNESCO Action Plan for UN Decade of ESD), learning and training tools (e.g., the ESD Toolkit and a policy and practice review tool—the ESD Lens (UNESCO, 2010c), the ESD Sourcebook (UNESCO, 2012a)), and a series of publications on key issues concerning ESD (e.g., Climate Change Starter’s Guidebook (UNESCO, 2011a)). These UNESCO publications cover a wide range of audiences, e.g., governments, international organizations, NGOs, academics, policy makers, and teachers.

In practice, however, regions, member states, and stakeholders have different needs (UNESCO, 2009b). *It is* hard for UNESCO, an IGO with limited funding and over 190 member states, to respond to each participant or situation. How does UNESCO cope with this an issue? The data of from the ESD project indicates that one fundamental method for UNESCO to manage the diverse needs of members states and local situations is by providing *generalized* knowledge and learning tools that can be useful in different contexts and situations (UNESCO, 20 July, 2011). As

Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013)—a former UNESCO professional—explicitly noted:

One way to do this is to create general tools and knowledge that member states can use so that they come up with their unique product that help them fulfill their sustainability goals and that are fit the environmental, social, economic contexts of their particular nation or communities.

The ESD Toolkit, for example, was considered a prominent model by the interviewees in UNESCO. Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013) and Ren (personal communication, April 30, 2013) even referred the ESD Toolkit as “the bible” in ESD promotion as it offered a general explanation of what ESD is, explained common issues concerning ESD promotion, and provided general guidelines for stakeholders to apply ESD in their policy formation and teaching practice.

Connecting this to the ESD Project in China, UNESCO’s publications and tools have long been important for advocating UNESCO ideas in China (Du, 2010c; Shen, 2009; Teng, 2010; Z. Xie, 2010a). Since the early stage of the project, the UNESCO ESD publications have been essential in creating a common understanding and raising public awareness on ESD in China. When asked how the UNESCO ESD idea was introduced and updated in China, a key figure in the ESD Project in China, Sun (personal communication, May 7, 2013) replied,

The main approach is through its [UNESCO’s] documents and publications. Especially, when we first learned the Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development idea, there were very few conferences on Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development...we [the National Committee] cherish the documents they [UNESCO] write and can benefit from the documents... UNESCO ESD publications are really helpful and worth learning for Chinese education.” During the promotion of the ESD Project in China, in other words, publications and tools are one essential way for UNESCO to interact with the National Committee, especially at the burgeoning stage of the project implementation.

However, as discussed earlier, UNESCO only provides generalized knowledge and tools; it does not supply specific guidelines for the National Committee to follow. Sun

(personal communication, March 8, 2014) talked about this in the interview: “for example, UNESCO tells us teacher training is very important in implementing ESD and provide some guidelines. It [UNESCO], however, doesn’t specify the ways for us to conduct teacher training.”

As a result, creating more specific guidelines for the local policy makers and practitioners to follow thus became a key task for the National Committee in China. In this sense, they need to frame UNESCO’s general statements in China’s specific cultural, social, and political context. Tying this discussion to the previous section’s discussion on negotiating ESD discourse on a transnational level, the data of this project have shown that the National Committee in China was embedded in a multi-layered, complex power relationship. On the one hand, it endeavored to assert its voice on the transnational level, yet was disadvantaged compared with its western counterparts. On the other hand, it became the main interpreter of the general knowledge disseminated by UNESCO within mainland China. In chapter 5, I will further unpack the strategies that the National Committee employed to localize ESD knowledge.

Advocating ESD knowledge through ICTs

The UN Decade of ESD International Implementation Scheme identifies the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as one of the important strategies in promoting ESD (UNESCO, 2005c). To better circulate the ESD knowledge through ICTs, UNESCO launched the ESD webpage and recently the UNESCO Climate Change Education Clearinghouse³⁹, and produced a series of online videos on ESD themes (e.g., Climate Change Education, Biodiversity). It,

³⁹ The Climate Change Education Clearinghouse contains “a large number of links to documents and materials from non-profit organizations, research institutions, government agencies and other sources outside the UN system” (UNESCO Climate Change Education Clearinghouse, 2013).

moreover, published some online tools such as a teacher education programme:

*Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*⁴⁰ (UNESCO, 2010d). Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013) passionately depicted the importance of ICTs (and Internet in particular) in the development of ESD worldwide,

I think the Internet has made ESD's growth very possible. The very neat thing about Internet is that you can publish without jumping to all the publisher's hoops. And it speeds things up. The Internet is pretty egalitarian. If you have an idea on ESD, you can put it up and that's going on around the world. I don't have to have your book in the library. I didn't go through that economic process of some librarian deciding can u afford your book or not. Instead, with the cost of the Internet provider, I can access to what you do.

Ren's description perfectly captures the advantages of ICTs in a globalized world. In the context of globalization, with ICTs, people at different places of the world may access the same information and share knowledge simultaneously, which facilitates the creation and dissemination of ESD knowledge globally.

In the promotion of the ESD Project in China, information sharing through ICTs (and especially Internet) plays a significant role in disseminating the UNESCO idea to the National Committee. When Sun (personal communication, May 7, 2013) was asked how Chinese stakeholders learned about the ESD idea and experience from UNESCO, he responded that one important method was

Through information sharing and knowledge exchange. For example, the latest information and publications UNESCO publishes on its website and through Internet are all sharing of information. In this way, each nation state receives documents and information simultaneously.

According to Sun (personal communication, May 7, 2013), such a method of communication "is different from human face-to-face communication; it is not through administrative means such as giving requests to governments and officials."

⁴⁰ At the same time UNESCO distributes the learning tools and publications to stakeholders in the form of CDs. "It contains 100 hours (divided into 27 modules) of professional development for use in pre-service teacher courses as well as the in-service education of teachers, curriculum developers, education policy makers, and authors of educational materials" (UNESCO, 2010d).

For information published online, Sun continued, “the nation states can take the initiative; and those who are willing to learn and accept it early can have easy access... China is willing to accept early, we are willing to take the initiative to act out after we receive helpful information.” ICTs, that is, provides the Chinese actors with easy and instant access to the international ESD knowledge and information. Knowledge and information sharing and exchange through ICTs becomes an effective way to let understanding flow across scales among diverse actors.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is “UNESCO’s key area of work” (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2011a). The capacity building conferences and training (e.g., workshops and seminars, etc.) are indeed fundamental approaches for UNESCO to interact with ESD stakeholders and transfer its ESD idea and knowledge across different scales, an important feature for global educational governance (will discuss this later in this chapter). Just as the former UNESCO official Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013) contended, “organizing and attending meetings and conferences help share knowledge and information among the ESD actors.” In the ESD Project in China, for example, almost every year, one or more experts in the National Committee participated and exchanged ideas with others in UNESCO’s regional and international conferences, workshops, and seminars such as the Bonn Conference, the UNESCO Policy Review Workshop on Learning for the Future in Jakarta, etc. (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2003, 2004, 2005).

For instance, the Bonn Conference in 2009 is acknowledged as a milestone event in the development of ESD worldwide in documents and interviews of the current study (Beijing Consensus, 2011; UNESCO, 2009a, 2010a, 2010e, 2012c). During the Bonn Conference, world ESD leaders and practitioners gathered in

Germany. UNESCO seized the opportunity and conducted capacity building activities for senior leaders. In the interview, Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013) described UNESCO's strategy in building capacity of senior leaders,

By Bonn, suddenly we had ministers of education there, and the strategy was to put them on the drafting committee of the declaration which means they had to really understand it. For three days, we had training for senior ministers of education. And once they started to understand it, they became very very powerful and strong.

Accordingly, the participation of diverse stakeholders in UNESCO conferences and workshops helps disseminate ESD knowledge and ideas to a wide audience and enhance their understanding and capacity of ESD. Meanwhile, it provides a platform for stakeholders to interact and share their experiences. This, as noted by Cao, could be very “powerful” and “strong” in influencing the ESD policy and practice in nation states such as China. China's Vice Minister of Education at the time (Chen), the former Secretary-General of the Chinese Natcom (Du), and the Executive Director of the National Committee (Shi) attended the Bonn Conference and participated in UNESCO's capacity building activities. “Trained” in the Bonn Conference, Chen, Du, and Shi frequently referred to the Bonn Conference and the key issues raised in the Bonn Declaration in their books or speeches on ESD (e.g., X. Chen, 2009; Du, 2010b; G. Shi, 2011a; G. Shi & Han, June, 2012). Moreover, often justified with reference to the Bonn Declaration, the relationship between ESD and quality education became a key focus of the ESD Project in China after 2009. ESD is frequently promoted as “a way to quality education” (Beijing Consensus, 2011; X. Chen, 2009; L. Liu, 2012; G. Shi & Han, June, 2012; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011). This demonstrates that UNESCO conferences such as the Bonn Conference and their outcome documents have influenced in the work of ESD in China.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The UN Decade of ESD International Implementation Scheme identifies “encourage monitoring and evaluation” as one of the UNESCO’s leadership roles in implementing ESD worldwide, as well as a fundamental approach in building, sharing and applying ESD-related knowledge (UNESCO, 20 July, 2011, 2005c). In 2007, UNESCO established a special network—the UN Decade of ESD *Monitoring & Evaluation Expert Group*—to offer technical advice on Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms for assessing global progress in the implementation of the UN Decade of ESD (UNESCO, 2010a). This expert network produced several reports on the UN Decade of ESD, e.g., the 2009 Mid-Decade Review on the Context and Structures of work on ESD (UNESCO, 2009b), the 2011 Expert Review of Processes and Learning (UNESCO, 2011c), and the 2012 report on learning processes related to ESD — Shaping the Education of Tomorrow (UNESCO, 2012d). By sharing and disseminating ESD knowledge and experience through Monitoring and Evaluation process, as Ren shared in the interview, people “learn so much through our lessons learned, both positive and negative. I’ve learned to avoid that and I’ve learned to do this. If we could share the lessons learned, that helps the efficiency of implementation” (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013).

According to UNESCO (20 July, 2011), the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism is an integral part of UNESCO’s capacity building and technical support to stakeholders, as the implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation entails internal consultations and learning processes of the nation states. UNESCO organized a series of regional workshops (e.g., Asia-Pacific workshop in Bangkok, Thailand (March 2011)) to reinforce capacities of ESD stakeholders to keep track of progress towards ESD with the participation of government officials, the National Commissions, NGOs,

other UN agencies, and academia (UNESCO, 20 July, 2011). Experts in the National Committee participated in the Asia-Pacific workshop and provided information on the progress of the ESD work in China. Moreover, at the national level, UNESCO asked the Chinese Natcom to fill out questionnaires and involve diverse ESD stakeholders in the completion of those questionnaires (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Experts in the National Committee completed the surveys and acted as China's key informants for the Monitoring and Evaluation of the ESD Project.

UNESCO's Monitoring and Evaluation reports, furthermore, are important resources for ESD stakeholders to share ESD knowledge, as well as learn the global progress of the ESD project and successful experiences and challenges of ESD work around the world. For example, the 2012 Monitoring and Evaluation report— *Shaping the Education of Tomorrow*—has been widely utilized by the Chinese ESD stakeholders and has influence in the ESD work in China. In 2012, the National Committee invested many resources in translating the *Shaping the Education of Tomorrow* into Chinese and published it in installments in the *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*. The 2012 Report was then used as an important material in ESD national and local workshops for training principals, teachers, and government officials (Sun, personal communication, February 28, 2013). According to a study by the National Committee, the 2012 Report helped Chinese stakeholders share and learn about other ESD experiences, improve the Chinese understandings of the ESD teaching and learning methods, and enriched the Chinese ESD framework (G. Shi, Han, & Ao, 2013).

Forming Networks and “Space of Flows” in Educational Governance

As shown earlier, UNESCO builds an international platform to bring together important stakeholders and facilitate sharing their knowledge of the ESD Project. The

discussions in the previous sections as well as this section respond to the first research question on how UNESCO engages itself and exerts influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China. In the following paragraphs, I further demonstrate that UNESCO disseminates ESD knowledge and provide technical assistance to Chinese ESD stakeholders through its international cooperation mechanism, such as exchange of expertise, experts, international conferences, etc. Among the many strategies that UNESCO employs, building networks features prominently as a key strategy to exert UNESCO's soft governance in the ESD Project in China. This naturally connects the discussion in this session to the research question on the features of global educational governance. As manifested in the data of the ESD case, network governance with "Space of Flows" is an important mechanism and characteristic of the emerging global educational governance.

Building Networks

Scholars such as Omolewa (2007) describe UNESCO "as a network and promoter of other networks." This echoes with UNESCO's own description that "UNESCO relies on a vast network of people, institutions and partners to focus its work and amplify its impact" (UNESCO. org). In promoting the ESD Project, UNESCO realizes that on the one hand, ESD is a "far-reaching and complex undertaking" (UNESCO, 2006a) and it has enormous responsibilities to lead and coordinate the ESD project on a global scale. On the other hand, it lacks the resources and capacity to carry out and localize such a global agenda in every nation state or local community. Facing this dilemma, UNESCO realizes that it has the "access to knowledge networks worldwide" (UNESCO, 2011b) and views networks as fundamental in providing information, expertise, and multiple resources and expanding its reach to the various actors in the ESD implementation. Networks, in

other words, are acknowledged as a fundamental component to the success of the UNESCO ESD Project (UNESCO, 2005c, p. 9). In the UN Decade of ESD International Implementation Scheme, UNESCO (2005c) insightfully points out that “the most crucial element to the Decade’s success is the scope of the human resources brought together.”

This was also echoed in the interviews. For example, when asked what were the critical elements in implementing ESD, a former UNESCO official and expert in the ESD field Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013) responded, “the networks have really been able to move through the progression of things where a staff of 10 or maybe even 7 or 6 at UNESCO Headquarters and the staff of all the field offices couldn’t accomplish. So it’s really distributed workload.” What’s more, Sun (personal communication, March 8, 2014) gave his perspective from the National Committee and explicitly argued the significance and advantages of a network structure in the interview:

[In the globalized modern world], the society is going to be a ‘flat’ structure. From this point of view, rather than relying on the government’s bureaucratic structure and organizations, the increasingly ‘flat’ social structure requires all the ESD stakeholders to cooperate and connect closely with each other. The bureaucratic organizations have the drawbacks of slow policy-making process and inefficiency. The ESD work, however, needs efficiency and forward-thinking ideas; the policy makers, scholars, principals and teachers that accept and understand ESD need to be connected first. Therefore, to connect these forward-thinking people in an efficient way, we have to bypass the current bureaucratic structure governments and organizations entail. Naturally, it needs efficient networks based on democracy. Networks are easily formed and promoted. There will be more and more networks on ESD.

Networks enjoy the advantages of a “flatter and more horizontal structure” (Stone, 2005) that efficiently convenes resources and carries out the ESD work at the international level while also being highly effective on the ground. Underlining the significance and advantages of networks and partnerships, consequently, as the lead agency of ESD, UNESCO proposes “a partnership framework” that serves as a means for identifying and encouraging a wide range of

partners to work together and also with UNESCO to realize the purpose of ESD (UNESCO, 2005c, 2006a, 2018b). These are partners at all scales – subnational (local, community), national, regional, and international, and from all sectors, i.e., government, civil society, NGOs, and private sector (UNESCO, 2005c, 2018b). In coordination with these partners, UNESCO established diverse network groups, such as UNESCO Reference Group on ESD⁴¹, with experts in the different spheres of ESD in setting strategic directions and enhancing the mobilization of partners (UNESCO, 2009b), High-Level Panel on the ESD with members of great political influence, University Twining Networks and UNESCO Chairs, and networks of local practitioners. For example, the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network is “the world’s largest network of schools. Starting with 33 schools in 15 Member States in 1953, the Network comprises today—in its 60th year of existence— more than 9700 educational institutions in 180 countries” (UNESCO, 2013a). According to UNESCO Bangkok (2008), “the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network has been a useful tool in strengthening the implementation of ESD activities at the national level.”

In particular, in the promotion of the ESD Project, the professionals or knowledge workers⁴² interact based on different expertise in certain fields and build “interlinks between organizational and epistemic hubs,” which forms knowledge networks. The University Twining Networks and UNESCO Chairs⁴³, specifically, are

⁴¹ The Reference Group was created to assist UNESCO “to think strategically on what UNESCO can and should do and to facilitate the coordination and mobilization of a diverse set of partners and stakeholders” (UNESCO, 2009b). Most of the members are scholars and experts in research institutes, NGOs, and governmental organizations.

⁴² Gunter (2012) calls the professionals in the epistemic communities the “knowledge workers” or “intellectual worker.”

⁴³ As UNESCO’s “main thrust of action in the field of higher education”, the University Twining Networks and UNESCO Chairs Programme was launched in 1992 (Calleja, 1995; UNESCO, 2007b; UNESCO. org). The networks and chairs are acknowledged by UNESCO, yet operate independent of the organization; they are mostly hosted in universities and research institutions. They are conceived as a way to advance research, training, and development in higher education “by building university

important networks of knowledge, workers, and international experts. According to Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013), UNESCO Chairs on ESD are “much tied” to UNESCO’s work. They are acknowledged as “hotspots” of the ESD Project (Wals & Kieft, 2010). The UNESCO Chairs work in a number of fields and specialties, such as teacher education, higher education, early childhood education, etc. and come from diverse geographic regions. The wide-ranging expertise and locations are beneficial to UNESCO because “it helps us [UNESCO] understand the breath of understanding ESD and the breath of implementation of the ESD” (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013).

The UNESCO Chair that holds closest contact with both UNESCO and the National Committee is arguably the UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education⁴⁴. The Chair holder, Hopkins, and the Executive Director of the National Committee, Shi, exchange their knowledge and information regularly through visits, attending conferences, research projects, and emails. To further strengthen their cooperation, Hopkins and Shi decided to form a regional institute (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2013a)⁴⁵. This institute is a regional network platform designed to bring experts together to facilitate ESD training, knowledge sharing, and collaborative research (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2013b).

networks and encouraging inter-university cooperation through the transfer of knowledge across borders” (UNESCO, 2009b).

⁴⁴ UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education was established at York University, Canada in 1999 (UNESCO). The Chair holder, Charles Hopkins, later created an International Network of 35 teacher education institutions from as many countries (UNESCO). Over the years, the International Network expanded and involved more teacher education institutions, forming larger regional and national networks to carry out ESD. It works closely with UNESCO, ministries, schools, and teacher education institutions to capture information and new insights on teacher education and ESD, carry out action research, and collect case studies to showcase ESD practices. For example, *Good Practices in Education for Sustainable Development: Teacher Education Institutions* was published by this Chair.

⁴⁵ In May 2014, the Asia-Pacific Institute for Education for Sustainable Development was officially launched in Beijing (The National Committee, 2014).

Moreover, UNESCO's conference mechanism, as illustrated earlier, is a fundamental method for UNESCO to facilitate international networks among knowledge workers and other actors all over the world, including UNESCO and the Chinese ESD stakeholders (Du, 2010c; Du & Dong, 2006; Jones & Coleman, 2005; Z. Xie, 2011). Every year, UNESCO convenes numerous meetings and high-level conferences on ESD, ranging from international conferences of states, intergovernmental meetings, and non-governmental conferences, to International Congresses on educational issues, meetings of advisory committees and expert committees, seminars, training and refresher courses, and symposia of different styles (UNESCO, 2013b). A UNESCO official points this out, "UNESCO has its own advantage in sharing the knowledge and experience—launching large-scale influential international conferences (Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012)". As argued earlier, through the international conferences, such as the Bonn Conference, UNESCO brings actors from different sectors together to not only enhance stakeholders' capacity, but also to discuss common concerns and issues while also exchanging knowledge and experiences. UNESCO's conferences, workshops, and seminars offer an international platform for discussion and knowledge sharing among ESD actors and create networks across platforms.

The question, then, is how to connect the various networks and individuals at different levels. Here, I utilize the word *key nodes* to portray actors that link multiple stakeholders and various resources together while also working to "connect disparate groups" and bring new information to different actors and networks (Pescosolido, 2006; Sharma). The document and interview data of this study indicate that key nodes in the promotion of the ESD Project in China may be characterized vertically and

horizontally. Vertically, key nodes “work at different levels simultaneously” (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Ren further explained,

They [the key nodes] are people who are adapted and moving between levels. It's like you are able to work on the ground; and you are able to get back at the airplane level and look at the major trends, and get back down on-the-ground, and then look at it and make sure you are doing the major trends and alternating between these perspectives... Our research informed our everyday application. Our every application either confirmed the research and theory, or else it told us we have to redo the research and theory to make it fit our observations here. So we are always going from research and policy to the classroom and schools and back up to the theory. So we are always connecting these two.

That is, key nodes connect international ideas and local practice, or “understand the airplane level” and the “on-the-ground work.”

Horizontally, in order to link different networks, it requires key nodes to incorporate a range of resources across sectors. For example, the ESD Project in China is carried out by a variety of actors, such as international and national ESD experts, UNESCO professionals and networks, government officials, and school practitioners. To effectively implement the ESD Project, therefore, key actors need to equip themselves with both ESD knowledge as well as political and administrative quality so they can connect with scholars, ESD practitioners, and policy makers in different sectors of the society (Sun, personal communication, May 7, 2013). The key nodes are likely to be actors with access to various sectors (e.g., IOs, governments, civil society, and private sectors) and different resources.

With the vertical and horizontal access, key nodes are able to interact with actors in different fields and form connections with diverse actors. In UNESCO, for example, there are a number of key nodes that are highly devoted to ESD and work across sectors and scales. One strategy UNESCO uses to promote the connection among actors worldwide is making UNESCO professionals (e.g., Lechit and McKeown) the key nodes to groups and networks (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Furthermore, there are key nodes in different regions promoting the

ESD Project with UNESCO. Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013) gave some examples: *Hopkins* in North America, and *Lorna Down*—a member of International Network of Teacher Education Institutions— have brought ESD to teachers in Caribbean through Jamaica and then the UNESCO Office in Kingston.

In the ESD Project in China, key nodes such as Hopkins, Lechit, and Shi are “really important” in linking international and local actors with diverse backgrounds together; and they are crucial in interpreting the ESD concept in a way that is locally relevant and culturally appropriate while also bringing local knowledge and experience into the international policy conversation. Interviewees from both UNESCO and the National Committee highlighted the importance of Shi and Hopkins in the development of the ESD Project internationally and in China. The interviewees explicitly stated that Hopkins and Shi’s passion, leadership qualities, personal energy, and time devoted in ESD moved the work forward internationally and in China (Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012; Wang, personal communication, May 31, 2012; Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Both Hopkins and Shi devote substantial time and energy providing guidance to national governments, schools, and communities and doing research based on their experience⁴⁶. They are able to understand and develop the abstract ESD ideas, link them with local practice, and conduct on-the-ground work; they also enjoy access to resources and people in multiple sectors and scales.

The networks help UNESCO better organize ESD resources, distribute its workload, and amplify its influence with regional and local actors. By engaging

⁴⁶ In promoting the ESD Project, Hopkins travels internationally almost 290 days a year, establishes a great number of networks (e.g., the CRTE and the IN of TEIs), and builds close relationships with many IGOs, governments, multilateral companies, and NGOs (Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013). Shi also conducts administrative work and education research related to ESD, and builds connections with schools, international experts, and policy makers in MOE and educational departments (Sun, personal communication, May 7, 2013).

various actors in networks, according to Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013), “if development occurs, it fringes all kinds of people.” That is to say, through networks, UNESCO excises its “convening power” and builds an international platform for all kinds of actors to connect and interact, mobilize resources, and share their knowledge and experience with each other.

Creating “Space of Flows” through Interactions

The rest of this chapter continues to put the formation of networks in the ESD project under the lenses of global educational governance. As I have discussed in the previous sections, the knowledge of ESD was transmitted on multiple scales and in different geographic locations through the creation of a plethora of networks. In this section, I will focus on how UNESCO governs in the ESD project through the creation of networks. By more explicitly addressing the relationship between networks and educational governance, I explore the feature of UNESCO’s soft governance (Research Question 4). The stakes are in what sense governing through networks democratize the processes of knowledge transmission and policy making. In the following, I briefly review the predominant view on this issue in existing literature. Then, I discuss in what sense the findings from the ESD project have confirmed or problematized the existing literature.

The literature review in chapter 2 shows network as an organizational form is characterized by non-binding, reciprocal, and voluntary patterns of interactions (Carpenter, 2007), as opposed to other organizational forms prevalent in our modern society such as bureaucracy. Network thus provides a crucial organizational foundation for the realization of soft governance in the process of educational globalization. This organizational foundation gives rise to the emerging “space of flows” in global policy and discourse development. As illustrated in chapter 2, a

number of education scholars such as Beech (2006, 2009), Lawn (2006), Dale (2007, 2009), Lewis et al. (2015), and Lewis (2017) have noticed the significance of space of flows, which enables actors from multiple scales to participate in the process of GEG. Scholars Nóvoa and Lawn (2002) and Lawn and Lingard (2002) furthermore depict an educational or learning space that is “shaped by constant interaction between small groups of linked professionals, managers and experts.” As previously discussed, this interactive feature stands out as the key organizational form of the ESD network in knowledge promotion, capacity building, and policy formation.

Existing literature thus taps into several key features of network governance and space of flows. One of the important effects of the “space of flows” is to entail the liquefying of knowledge; and in this specific case, it is the liquefying of ESD knowledge. Scholars such as Sobe and Ortégón (2009) argue that with global actors and interactions, knowledge has become “liquid and mobile,” enabling the flows of knowledge among actors at a distance. In the globalization context, in other words, large circles of communication and networks may “liquefy” knowledge, sustain and accelerate “the worldwide flows of educational knowledge” (Dewey, 1915; Sobe & Ortégón, 2009; Steiner-Khamisi, 2004); and knowledge becomes “productive and an active, material practice in constructing the world” (Popkewitz, 2000, p.16).

Additionally, mobilizing knowledge through networking highlights its potential to democratize knowledge transmission and policy-making and taps into the liberating effect of network-based educational practice and policy-making.

The findings from this project partly confirm and extend the ideas in the existing literature. This study shows that UNESCO created multiple international cooperation mechanisms, such as the exchange of experts and individuals and international conferences. In addition to organizing different horizontal and flattened

networks, UNESCO also advocates forming networks across different geographic locations and at different levels of the ESD project. However, highlighting network's effect of liquefying knowledge and flattening global governance, existing literature does not pay enough attention to the formation of key nodes in networks. The case of ESD may help us obtain some insights on this issue and how 'space of flows' is created through the key nodes and networks.

In this study, a global educational space depicts an interactive space of flows that constitutes various forms of flows, especially the flows of people, information, ideas and knowledge. Lawn (2002) strongly argues that a new educational space has been and will continue to be formulated in Europe and internationally, and it is also in a constant process of becoming. Such space is facilitated by interactions, networks, and heterogeneous actors from different sectors and scales. In the promotion of the ESD Project, in practice, the idea of flows of knowledge *in* and *through* interactions is implicit and central for actors, such as UNESCO, to govern at a distance.

Heterogeneous yet like-minded actors are linked together via key nodes and enjoy their collective access to resources. The flows of knowledge in and through interactions likely foster the formation of a global educational space, or as Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013) describes, "global learning cycles" in the global world. In the process of promoting the ESD Project in China, a global educational space is formed *in* and *through* interactions among various actors in UNESCO, China, and all over the world. Such an idea of *global educational space* is consistent with Castells (2000)'s idea of "space of flows"—a new spatial logic in the global age—and Nóvoa and Lawn (2002) and Lawn and Lingard (2002)'s depiction of an education space shaped by interactions among actors in EU and European states.

Such a global educational space does not have a fixed place of operation, any legislative mandate or constitutional position. It is shaped by constant interactions among different actors across scales, and it is being formed between nation states (e.g., China) and IGOs (e.g., UNESCO), between knowledge workers and policy makers, between public sector actors and civil society actors, etc. For example, Leicht is the Chief of the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters; Hopkins and Shi are both knowledge workers and practitioners in the implementation of the ESD Project; and Du, as a government official and player in policy making in the ministry of education in China, is mostly involved in political arena and entails political influence in China.

They are all involved in a variety of activities between UNESCO and China. These actors interact through UNESCO's collaborative mechanisms and activities such as publications, research, international conferences and workshops, international cooperation and exchange (as shown in the previous chapter and earlier in this chapter). Flows of ESD knowledge are exchanged and produced with these relationships and interactions, through which the ESD idea is localized and implemented in the Chinese education policy and practice. The educational space of the GEG in the case of ESD, thus, may be understood as an immaterial space created by flows of knowledge *in* and *through* interactions across various actors.

Furthermore, any understanding of global educational governance must account for constant possibility of change in practice. Global educational governance is "a dynamic process" in that "nothing is ever governed once and for all time" (Avant et al., 2010; Castells, 2010). The network governance of the ESD Project in China, therefore, is dynamic and functions as a microcosm of how GEG may work in practice. Despite its dynamic nature, three crucial factors can be identified in the governance process: *First*, the approaches and mechanisms that the various actors at

multiple scales employ; *Second*, the important features of the governance process (e.g., governing in and through “a network of networks”, the interpenetration of multiple scales, and soft governance); and *Third*, interactions among the actors and the special roles they play.

Altogether, as discussed earlier, the globalization process changes the concept of space and in the promotion process of the ESD Project in China, an interactive space or a global educational space is gradually formed, which involves various actors and key nodes from different sectors and scales. A broad educational space of governance emerges in the process of the ESD implementation. Education, in this sense, is “no longer locked up in the silos of national systems” (Lawn, 2006). The nation states are not the sole actors of governance or the exclusive scale at which the governance of education takes place (Dale, 2007). Echoing Lawn (2002)’s perception on a new governance space, education policies and practice such as the ESD Project are becoming “borderless,” “inside the unbounded space of policy-making.”

Originating at the global scale with the legitimation from IGOs such as UN and UNESCO, international policies such as ESD Project and their promotion in nation states are beyond the scope of the national government or local actors. Connected through the key nodes with access to multiple scales and sectors, the “borderless” interaction of GEG has opened space for non-state and non-public actors and non-governmental influences in educational governance. In the case of implementing ESD in China, on the one hand, UNESCO identified China as a centralized state and located key change facilitators mostly on the national level.

Unlike UNESCO’s work in de-centralized countries such as Canada, in China UNESCO must work closely with the National Committee of ESD. On the other hand, given the international nature of the ESD Project and involvement of actors across

multiple scales, the formation of networks in the ESD Project in China is gradually shifting the authority of governance of ESD Project to multiple levels, going beyond the Chinese government. Such networks have manifested in the creation of ‘space of flows’ of the ESD Project. In chapter 5, I will discuss more details and argue that the promotion of the ESD Project involves active interactions among diverse actors, i.e., UNESCO, the Chinese government, a global civil society actor (the National Committee), policy elites (the international experts and policy makers), etc. And I will further unpack ‘space of flows’ and the shift of authority in promoting ESD knowledge, policy and practice in China both nationally and locally.

Summary

In this chapter, I laid out my findings and discussions regarding the formulation and implementation of the UNESCO ESD project. I adopted a perspective that primarily focuses on the work that UNESCO has been doing, specifically creating a universal ESD discourse and mobilizing global ESD networks. I further situated UNESCO’s work in its interaction with China. These discussions developed a general understanding of the research questions pertaining to how UNESCO engaged itself and exerted influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China. I also developed a preliminary discussion to examine the characteristics of global educational governance as they are manifested in the ESD project, which shed light on the research question on key features of GEG.

In particular, the discussion highlights two issues: first, how was ESD globalized in a complex discursive formation process? Second, how did the global educational networks, specifically the ESD networks, create flows of knowledge and identify key nodes? The discussion of these two questions set the stage for us to further investigate the interaction between UNESCO and China. For instance, through

drawing an overarching picture of the discursive formation of ESD, we know that China, as a non-western country, was at the sidelines, receiving the discourse rather than creating it. This position raises the question of how the ESD stakeholders in China received the ESD discourse and whether it is possible for China to engage in the constant transnational move of formulating and interpreting ESD discourse. Furthermore, because contemporary China is still a centralized, authoritarian state, it became a place to test the limits of network governance, a type of soft governance with its intrinsic liberating and democratizing effects. Did the ESD network created in China reinforce the centralized power? In what sense were multiple actors introduced to this knowledge-sharing space of governance? In general, scholars contend that one of the key effects of soft governance/network governance is the shift of authority. When network governance was introduced to an authoritarian state, how did the key actors deal with the convergence of the two types of governing styles? I will further discuss these interesting topics of GEG in chapter 5.

Chapter 5 “Chewing” and “Feeding” the UNESCO ESD Ideas in China

Introduction

In chapter 4, I illustrated the evolution of the international ESD idea, how UNESCO promoted the ESD concept through its soft mechanisms, and how the promotion of the ESD project is an instantiation of global educational governance. This chapter aims to examine the ESD project in China with a focus on how the UNESCO ESD idea was appropriated and promoted in the context of contemporary China, which details how global educational governance happens at the national and local scales and the roles various actors play in this governance process. Moreover, I synthesize the global and the national/local to explore governance along the lines of the engagement and influence of these actors in ESD policies and practice.

A major part of my analysis of the ESD project in China will revolve around the analogies of “chewing” and “feeding.” In an interview with Sun, a key national expert in promoting the ESD project in China, he summarized the implementation process as “chewing the ESD ideas and feeding them to the schools.” (Sun, personal communication, June 9, 2012) The analogies of “chewing” and “feeding,” as my study shows, illustrate the adoption and implementation of the ESD project in China. The Chinese ESD stakeholders “chewed” or studied the UNESCO ESD ideas, connected them with the Chinese context, and “fed” or implemented these ideas in the Chinese education. I also draw insights from key ESD stakeholders in China, as well as analyze the diverse roles actors play in these “chewing” and “feeding” processes. I start with an analysis of the rationale for China to promote the ESD project, and then move on to explain the adoption of ESD ideas—the chewing, and the implementation of ESD project—the feeding. These sections unpack the research questions on how the ESD project was promoted in China on the national level and in what way the

relevant Chinese actors influenced educational policy and practice in the ESD case. Throughout the discussions, I situate the processes of “chewing” and “feeding” in the global educational governance (GEG) framework. I then connect the concepts of network governance and authority with the roles that the diverse actors played in the governance process. This analysis then allows me to examine the features of GEG as reflected in the case of the ESD project.

The Rationale for China to Promote the ESD Project

In chapters 1 and 4, I discussed the sociopolitical background for China to promote the ESD project and the organizational foundations for its implementation. In this chapter, I explicate the rationale for China to adopt and implement the project. Before examining how the ESD Project was understood and implemented in China, it is crucial to understand why the Chinese stakeholders were interested in this project in the first place.

In presenting the organizational foundation of the ESD project (chapter 4), I delineated its primary stakeholders, including the Chinese Natcom, the ESD National Committee, and various local committees, as well as relevant schools, teachers, and students. The data on the establishment of the ESD project in China demonstrate that when the UNESCO ESD project was introduced in China in 1998 the Chinese central government took initiative in adopting this UNESCO project (G. Shi, 2010b, 2011b; T. Zhang, 2010; X. Zhang, 2006), specifically, the Chinese Natcom coordinated the initial set-up in China. The interview data confirmed this, “it was China who took the initiative in implementing ESD at the first place” (Sun, personal communication, March 8, 2014). The data, further show that when transferring the ESD idea in educational policy and practice at national and local levels, the Chinese ESD stakeholders, especially the National Committee, proactively researched the ESD idea,

connected them to Chinese contexts, and localized the ESD idea in Chinese schools with specific strategies. What motivated the Chinese stakeholders to proactively establish the project in China?

As Carpenter (2010) notes, if a global idea or issue is highly suited to the work the national or local actors (especially nation states) are doing and not politically sensitive, the nation-states often prefer to play a significant role in advocating it. In the case of the ESD project, for the Chinese government to act upon and adopt an international concept, an obvious motivation is that the concept or project can be utilized to fulfill its needs. In the words of Da (personal communication, July 19, 2012), a high-level official at UNESCO with strong tie to the Chinese government, “as long as the UNESCO idea and policy fits China’s national or local needs, the Chinese people will make great effort to develop the idea or policy in China, through governmental or non-governmental approaches.” A number of documents and interviews also show that the rationale of “having it work for us” (Wei Wo Suo Yong; 为我所用) has been a major underlining motivation for the Chinese government to cooperate with UNESCO and adopt UNESCO’s ideas and projects⁴⁷. That is, Chinese stakeholders act proactively in adopting an idea or project if the international project can be utilized to help Chinese development. Specifically, there are three main motivations for Chinese actors to adopt and actively implement the ESD project:

First, the Chinese stakeholders are aware of the challenges of the environmental and sustainability issues in China and acknowledge that the UNESCO ESD idea may serve its national sustainable development agenda (X. Chen, 2009). In

⁴⁷ For example, Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (2009b), Wu (personal communication, May 9, 2012) and Yang (personal communication, May 11, 2012) explicitly used the words “have it work for us” when discussing why Chinese government would like to implement UNESCO’s projects such as ESD project.

China, sustainable development is a priority in the national strategy designed to signal the importance of countering challenges of economic and social development (Chinese Government, 2016; International Labour Organisation, 2011; Qiao, 2009; Tilt, 2009; Watts, 2010). Since the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, the Chinese government has been a firm supporter of the international agreement on sustainable development—the *Agenda 21*. In 1994, the Chinese government issued *China's Agenda 21: White Paper on China's Population, Environment and Development in the 21st Century*, which affirmed that sustainable development was a top priority of the national development and reform agenda (State Council, 1994). Two years later, the Chinese government acknowledged sustainable development and “Revitalizing the Nation through Science and Education” (Ke Jiao Xing Guo; 科教兴国) as its long-term national strategies. In 2003, the national government proposed the “Scientific Outlook on Development (Ke Xue Fa Zhang Guan; 科学发展观)” with “people-oriented, comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable features” (Department of Publicity of the CCP, 2006). The significance of sustainable development was stressed at the highest level of the government.

Subsequent *Five Year Plans*⁴⁸ as well as the newly issued *China's National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, further highlighted that education, science, and technology should be strong driving forces to facilitate China's sustainable development strategies (Chinese Government, 2016; State Council, 2001, 2006, 2011). That is, education was reinforced at the highest level of the government as an essential element in boosting public awareness, building

⁴⁸ “Five-Year Plans” are plans the Chinese government make every five years to lay out the major development projects and reforms, and the direction, vision, and key issues in China's economic and social development (China. com. cn). The *First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957)* was initiated under Mao's government (China. com. cn). Currently, China is undergoing its *Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2011-2015)*.

capacity on sustainable development, and a key driver toward sustainability. Adopting and implementing the UNESCO ESD project seemed to be appropriate action for the Ministry of Education to take in this context. As noted in the documents, ESD is a fundamental guideline for the education sector to follow and contribute to China's sustainable development agenda (X. Chen, 2008; G. Shi, 2016b; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a, 2011).

Second, the Chinese government can be seen as searching for possible solutions for the issues Chinese educational development faces. Chinese education had undergone a series of educational reforms since 1980s, such as basic education reform, curriculum reform, quality education⁴⁹ reform, and education systemic reform (Hu, 2012; Z. Shi & Zhang, 2008; J. Zhang, 2016). In particular, the exam-oriented education (Ying Shi Jiao Yu; 应试教育) has long been a major issue in Chinese education as it focuses primarily on students' test scores, hinders students' creativity and individual development, and neglects students' development of learning capacity (Z. Liu & Hu, 2005; Pan, 2001; Yang, 1997). The recent educational reforms, especially the curriculum reform and quality education reform, aim at tackling the challenges of the exam-oriented education and promote student-centered quality-oriented teaching and learning (Pan, 2001; Yang, 1997; J. Zhang, 2016).

As the UNESCO ESD idea highlights quality education and student-centered learning processes and the project is international by nature, the ESD project is acknowledged as a way to provide, in part, the solutions to the aforementioned

⁴⁹ Quality education refers to education that provides all citizens with the knowledge, skills, values, and perspectives that will assist the achievement of a just, equitable, and ecologically sustainable future (Beijing Consensus, 2011; L. Liu, 2011).

educational issues in China⁵⁰ (e.g., curriculum development, quality education, internationalization). For example, X. Chen (2008), the former Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education, underscores that ESD can be a necessary solution for tackling the challenges of Chinese education and better promote education reforms. Wu (personal communication, May 9, 2012), a senior expert in the National Committee passionately stated that

According to the DESD, it's crucial to emphasize the quality of education and reform our educational plan and philosophy. In fact, this fits well with the spirit of the Chinese education reforms. Therefore, ESD is essentially a critical idea. It touches the fundamental direction of education.

Third, since the end of 1990s, one key emerging task for the Chinese government is to internationalize and increase China's "*soft power*" (S. Xie, December 14, 2001). This becomes even more prominent with the recent national initiatives such as the 'One Belt and One Road' initiative (People Daily, 2017). The internationalization of education has become a trend in the Chinese education policy and practice (Jiang & Sun, 2003). As demonstrated in chapter 1, UNESCO has long been perceived as an important platform for China to connect with the world and internationalize itself. As a result, the ESD project has been viewed as a way to promote the internationalization⁵¹ of the Chinese education from the early stages of its implementation (Du, 2002; G. Shi, 2016b).

Moreover, the Chinese stakeholders realized that by implementing the UNESCO projects, it can not only be utilized as an approach for Chinese education to "go out" (meaning become internationalized), but also increase China's soft power on an international scale (Du, 2002, 2010a, 2010b, 2011a). This is driven mainly by

⁵⁰ Such a connection between ESD ideas and China's educational development can be identified in a number of documents in China (X. Chen, 2008, 2009; Du, 2002; G. Shi, 2010b; L. Shi, 2010c; L. Zhang, 2010; L. Zhang, Du, & Shi, 2010; L. Zhang & Kang, 2007; T. Zhang, 2010; X. Zhang, 2006).

⁵¹ Facilitating the internationalization of Chinese education through the ESD project is often highlighted in speeches by officials in the Ministry of Education and Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences (X. Chen, 2008, 2009; Du, 2002, 2010a; G. Shi, 2011a).

China's political will in the 21st century (Du, 2002, 2010a, 2010b, 2011a). Both document and interview data⁵² suggest that China seeks to facilitate its political will of "building and wielding China's soft power" by deepening and broadening its cooperation with UNESCO. In other words, as discussed in chapter 1, in a "fallen princess"(UNESCO) and "new rich" (China) relationship in the 21st century, China sees UNESCO as a critical platform to build its soft power and gain more international recognition and support (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2007; M. Fang, 2010; M. Zhang, 2010). In this context, "the Chinese people and government attach great importance to China's continuous cooperation with UNESCO" (UNESCO Press, March 2, 2011).

As mentioned in chapter 1, in the 21st century, China seeks to engage more in UNESCO's projects and activities. The ESD project was one important area for China to cooperate with UNESCO and become actively involved in UNESCO's work. Facilitating the internationalization of Chinese education and increasing China's "voice" through the ESD project are often emphasized in speeches given by officials in the Ministry of Education and the Beijing Academy of Educational Science (X. Chen, 2008, 2009; Du, 2002, 2010a; G. Shi, 2011a).

In short, for any country to adopt an international concept or project, the simple rationale is that the concept or project will be utilized to fulfill needs. In the case of the ESD project, the needs of China's sustainable development agenda and educational development reveal the underlying rationale for why the UNESCO ESD project was promoted in China. That is, the ESD concept contributed to China's national sustainable development strategies, helped address and even solve some

⁵² For example, Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (2010), Du (2010), Lang (personal communication, August 10, 2012), Yu (personal communication, August 14, 2012), Ma (personal communication, August 17, 2012), etc.

challenges of its current education system, as well as facilitated the rise of Chinese “voice” and “soft power” in international society. These needs and interests have greatly shaped how the Chinese stakeholders navigate their action when carrying out the ESD project and how they interact with UNESCO as well as with each other.

Chewing: Localizing the UNESCO ESD Ideas in Chinese Education

Drawing on the document and interview data of this study, a process of transferring the UNESCO ESD idea into Chinese education can be presented into three components: (1) the adoption of an international idea and agenda (as discussed in last section); (2) “chewing” or understanding the international ESD ideas and knowledge within national and local contexts; (3) “feeding” or implementing the international ESD ideas into the national and local practice, knowledge, and policy. Such a “feeding” process yields changes in educational practice and policy. “Feeding” also means the ESD practitioners in China looked for opportunities to tie their national/local experience and knowledge back to the global.

In chapter 4, I have detailed how the ESD project was first adopted and approved by China’s central government. This is a crucial initial step in the development of the ESD idea in China, particularly because China’s central government played a key role in knowledge transferring between the global and the local (more on this role will be discussed later in the chapter). In this section, I continue the analysis of the ESD project in China by illustrating the process of “chewing.” The data show that it is essentially through researching and piloting the UNESCO ESD idea in Chinese schools, creating a Chinese framework, and making ESD culturally relevant to Chinese context that the National Committee understands or “chews” the UNESCO ESD idea, and connects them to education in China.

Researching and piloting the UNESCO ESD ideas

Research is identified as “the driving force” to promote ESD in China (G. Shi & Wang, 2010; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a; J. Zhang, 2016). Since 1998, the Chinese ESD expert team has carried out extensive research on the international ESD idea and practice. When asked how the ESD stakeholders in China made sense of the ESD idea, three interviewees in the National Committee underlined “researching the ESD idea” and “piloting in schools and refining the ESD idea” as the primary approach (Sun, personal communication, June 9, 2012; Feng, personal communication, May 8, 2012; Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012). Drawing from the ESD research and its experience from previous educational practice in other projects, the core expert team studied the key elements of ESD, and conducted pilot projects in a number of schools in Beijing and other provinces in China. In late 2000 and early 2001, the core expert team certified the first 150 ESD Experimental Schools in China (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2003). Continuous research and pilot studies were conducted in these ESD schools. As a result, more schools became interested in ESD and started gradually to localize the ESD idea at school and local levels (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a). Through research and pilot projects, in other words, the ESD theory and practice started to spread throughout out in China.

Furthermore, In the process of promoting the ESD project in China, understandings of ESD have evolved overtime (X. Chen, 2009; Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 2009a; L. Liu, 2012; G. Shi, 2011a). As Feng and Sun noted in their interviews, at early stages, the ESD research and pilot study focused primarily on two aspects of education—integrating ESD contents into school curriculums and using ESD idea to update teaching and learning methods. During the

development of the ESD project, the National Committee, together with local committees and schools, continuously refined their ESD understandings and practice based on the UNESCO ESD work, their ongoing ESD research, and pilot studies. The newly updated ESD understandings and practice, in turn, enriched the ESD research. Over the past 15 years, the National Committee has carefully studied the UNESCO ESD idea and connected it with the ongoing needs of Chinese education. Through the continuous research and pilot projects, the National Committee gradually developed an ESD definition and a Chinese ESD framework.

Creating a Chinese ESD framework

In China, ESD mainly refers to educating individuals with scientific knowledge, learning capacity, values, and sustainable lifestyle to meet the ecological development needs, with the purpose of promoting the sustainable development of the society, economy, environment, and culture (G. Shi & Han, 2012, June, 2012; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011). In educating for the sustainability of society and individuals, the National Committee developed a Chinese ESD framework that highlighted the 16-word teaching and learning principal and ESD Roadmap (2-1-3-3-2-3-4). Particularly, the National Committee summarized the ESD teaching and learning methods into the 16-word (16 Chinese words) principle: student-centered, infusion of ESD in classrooms, cooperative learning, and connecting knowledge with practice (G. Shi & Wang, 2006).

The ESD roadmap (2-1-3-3-2-3-4) developed by the National Committee illustrates the main framework and the primary focus of the ESD project (Appendix 6). The ESD roadmap (2-1-3-3-2-3-4) entails two implications of meaning for the ESD concept (the sustainable development of *individuals* and *society*) and the contents of

ESD (one core and three basics⁵³); meanwhile, it embraces three levels of ESD schools, two thematic areas in ESD, and three levels of curriculum development that are designed for applying the ESD idea into educational practice. Finally, after such a process, ESD in China aims to achieve the four main goals of ESD⁵⁴ (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2010, 2011).

Such a Chinese ESD framework is fundamental in ensuring that the UNESCO ESD project can be closely related to and localized in Chinese education (G. Shi & Han, 2012; L. Shi, 2009). According to L. Shi (2009, p. 21), the former Director of the National Working Committee of ESD in China,

The primary reason that ESD was successfully implemented in China is that based on the national SD strategy and the need of the quality education reform, [the National Committee] imported the international ESD idea, designed and localized the ESD idea, and finally constructed the Chinese ESD framework.

In other words, the ESD roadmap is a fruit of the localization of the ESD discourse.

Making ESD culturally and politically relevant

To make the ESD concept culturally and politically relevant and acceptable to Chinese stakeholders, experts of the National Committee worked to link the UNESCO ESD concept with current issues in Chinese society and educational system. The National Committee translates the abstract UNESCO ESD idea and the Chinese ESD framework into catchwords and number systems that are easy to remember and circulate. The ESD roadmap (2-1-3-3-2-3-4) and the ESD teaching and learning

⁵³ “One core” refers to the ESD values (“Four Respects”: Respect others, including those of the present and future generations, for difference and diversity, for the environment, and for the resources of the planet we inhabit. “Three basics” refers to the three important elements students should learn *sustainable knowledge*; *sustainable learning capacity*; and *sustainable lifestyle* (G. Shi & Wang, 2006; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011).

⁵⁴ The four educational goals of ESD include: a) to help students form the values of sustainable development; b) to help students acquire the scientific knowledge of sustainable development; c) to help students improve their sustainable learning capacity; d) to help students practice sustainable lifestyle; and e) to help students follow the practical problems of sustainable development and contribute to their solution.

principle are good examples of this strategy. Interestingly, it is not hard to discover that the ESD roadmap effectively captures the core of the UNESCO ESD idea, as well as the implementation process of the ESD project in China. Using the combination of numbers and catchwords, the National Committee turns the UNESCO ESD idea and the process of implementation into a slogan and feeds it into ESD schools, the public, the policy domain, etc.

The creation of number systems and catchwords, to a great extent, is to suit the political culture of China. In the Chinese political culture, catchwords and numbers have, for a long time, been used to advocate the core values and agendas of the government. Many central policies and political and economic agendas are summarized using such expressions⁵⁵. The use of catchwords and numbers in promoting ESD in China, therefore, helps translate the UNESCO ESD concept into culturally and politically acceptable ideas and then implement in schools. Additionally, the Chinese version of the ESD discourse was also adapted to conform to the state's political ideology. For instance, in my interview with Teacher Wu (personal communication, May 9, 2012), she mentioned,

The value of UNESCO is reflected from its programs. When adopting these programs, China tends to ignore their value orientation, such as human rights, fairness, and so on. Instead, China focuses on the aspects of the programs more relevant to its interests. It employs an attitude of utilitarianism, namely, “making it work for me” (为我所用) .

From the perspective of key Chinese stakeholders, the content related to human rights was incredibly sensitive. After all, the state ideology in China often criticizes western countries for employing the human rights discourse as a strategy to intervene in

⁵⁵ For example, after the Open Door Policy, the Chinese government proposed and advocated a number of national strategies and guidelines with catchwords and numbers, such as summarizing the main contents of national economic and social development as “*one central task* (of economic construction) and *two basic points* (of adhering to the four cardinal principles and the policies of reform, opening to the outside world, and invigorating the domestic economy) (一个中心，两个基本点)” (The People.com.cn).

China's domestic affairs. Removing human rights discourse from the Chinese ESD framework, demonstrates the key Chinese players in the chewing process also play the role of gatekeeper. During this process, ideas such as human rights education are dropped. As a consequence, the chewing process changes, localizes, and reshapes the ideas introduced by the UNESCO ESD discourse.

Feeding: Implementing the ESD Ideas in Chinese Education

By researching, piloting and making the UNESCO ESD idea relevant to various issues in China, ESD was “imported” to China, connected to the national context, and then implemented in local schools (Sun, personal communication, June 9, 2012; Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012). The National Committee realizes that “strategies that are appropriate, workable and easy to coordinate the various stakeholders are crucial” to transfer the ESD idea to school practice (Sun, personal communication, May 7, 2013). Following a variety of strategies, the National Committee feeds the ESD idea into the schools and districts in China.

Promoting ESD with specific strategies

In order to promote the ESD idea in Chinese education, the National Committee developed and carried out several main strategies, e.g., publication and guiding tools, “3-2-3” of the ESD roadmap that are designed for applying the ESD idea into educational practice, capacity building workshops, and international and regional cooperation.

Publication and learning tools. Publication and learning tools are not only important approaches for UNESCO to disseminate its ideas, but also a fundamental approach the National Committee follows to disseminate the ESD idea to Chinese stakeholders. In 2002, for example, based on its research on the major UNESCO ESD documents, the National Committee issued the *Regulations of the Environment*,

*Population, and Sustainable Development (EPD) Project*⁵⁶ in China and *The Manual of the EPD Project in China*⁵⁷. This document set the direction, rules, and specific procedures to carry out the ESD project in Chinese schools and for a while served as the policy guide for implementing the ESD project in China. In 2011, the National Committee published the new version of the guidebook—*the ESD in China Experimental Manual* in guiding the development of the project.

Additionally, with years of research and study, the National Committee published and circulated a great number of books, case studies, and research papers. These publications and documents cover a broad range of topics such as ESD curriculum development, teaching and learning experiences, ESD theories, school practices, and international ESD development (e.g., X. Chen, 2009; G. Shi & Wang, 2006; L. Shi, 2010b; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a, 2010; G. Wang, 2003; T. Zhang, 2010; X. Zhang, 2006). What's more, the core expert team released the first issue of *Journal of EPD in China*⁵⁸ in 2000, which was later retitled to *Journal of ESD in China*, in better circulating the ESD research and successful experiences in ESD schools (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2003). These publications and guiding tools are fundamental channels for the National Committee to disseminate its ESD knowledge and experience to various stakeholders and advocate the ESD idea at national and local levels.

The Implementation of the ESD roadmap. Following the strategies proposed in the ESD roadmap, the National Committee established three tiers of ESD schools,

⁵⁶ As discussed in chapter 1, the Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development (EPD) Project started in 1994 and later became the ESD project in 2002 with the launch of the UN Decade of ESD.

⁵⁷ According to Sun (personal communication, May 8, 2013), UNESCO didn't participate in the discussion or drafting of the ESD regulations or rules in China; Rather, the National Committee sets the regulations of the ESD project in China, with consultations of diverse stakeholders in schools, local districts, governments, and the Chinese Natcom.

⁵⁸ In 2006, *Journal of EPD in China* changed its name to *Journal of ESD in China*. As of October 2013, the National Committee has published over 60 volumes of this Journal. The Journal is distributed to a great number of ESD schools and educational institutions in China.

delineated two thematic areas in ESD, and encouraged ESD-related curriculum development in applying the ESD idea into school practice. At the beginning of the project, the National Committee developed the strategy of establishing different tiers of ESD schools, i.e., ESD Experimental School, ESD Example School, and National ESD Example School (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2011). The three tiers of ESD schools have been expanding dramatically over the past 15 years. As of 2013, over 1,000 Chinese schools in 14 provinces have become ESD schools (G. Shi et al., 2013). Moreover, the National Committee is “building a number of ESD Experimental Districts across different regions in China”⁵⁹(Feng, personal communication, May 8, 2012).

Capacity building workshops. In China, training and workshops are considered as fundamental approaches in raising teachers’ understandings of ESD and incorporating the ESD teaching and learning methods in their daily teaching practice (G. Shi, 2016b; G. Shi et al., 2013; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a; T. Zhang, 2010). This idea was explicitly brought up by interviewees, Feng and Sun. Sun (personal communication, June 9, 2012), for example, noted,

Based on the Chinese experience, understandings of ESD idea of the principals and teachers are directly related to the extent to which they promote ESD practice. And training and capacity building of the principals and teachers are crucial in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of ESD.

⁵⁹ Moreover, the National Committee, together with the local committees and schools, designs and carries out a variety of activities regarding two special themes in ESD—environment and resources and society and culture. In response to the strategy, the National Committee established diverse partnerships with communities, enterprises, NGOs, and others stakeholders to organize a variety of special activities for students and schools, such as building energy-saving campuses⁵⁹, ‘girls in sciences’ development plans, national and local contests, and community volunteering service. Additionally, the National Committee encourages the ESD-related curriculum development in Chinese ESD schools. The national curriculum is designed by the MOE and is mandatory for all schools. The development of national curriculum means to integrate ESD idea into the implementation of the national curriculum in ESD schools (Wu, 2010; J. Zhang, 2016). Besides, school-based curricula and teaching materials have been developed based on the situation of the schools and local environment (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a).

The National Committee has conducted capacity building training and workshops at three different levels—national, local, and school-based training.

The National ESD Workshops, specifically, are considered a key approach to share international and local ESD knowledge, information, and good practices with ESD schoolteachers and principals (Du, 2010b; Lee & Huang, 2009; G. Shi, 2016b; T. Zhang, 2010). From 1999 to 2017, there were 12 national workshops held in China by the National Committee. Through the national workshops, these diverse ESD stakeholders in both UNESCO and China exchanged ideas, shared knowledge and experience, and enriched their thoughts and understandings on education and ESD, which significantly helps the promotion of ESD in China (G. Shi et al., 2013; L. Shi, 2010a). As the Director of the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences —L. Shi (2010a) summarized in his speech in the 10th National Workshop:

I think there are several features of the ESD national workshops. First is experiencing sharing; second is idea exchanging; and third is ESD planning and promotion. Although the workshop is only for several days, it convened various prestigious experts... Actually, each presenter is the disseminator of knowledge and experience. With the national workshops, we disseminate and share our experience; and through such process, our understandings and ideas transcend. Such promotion of understandings and ideas is manifested through idea exchange and experience sharing. I think idea sharing is very essential in the workshops. When we come to the workshops and meetings, everyone has his/her ideas. If everyone leaves the workshops with more meaningful ideas, then the workshops is a success.

International and regional cooperation. The National Committee and ESD schools conduct international and regional (mostly in the Asia-Pacific region) cooperation through international conferences, meetings, and exchange activities. The international cooperation activities focus on “borrowing” the successful ESD experience from the international communities and at the same time “advocating and lending” the successful Chinese experience to the international communities, bridging the international with the local (G. Shi & Han, 2012).

The National Committee organizes international conferences in facilitating international communication and cooperation. It develops a conference mechanism that utilizes “the Beijing International Forum on ESD and the ESD National Workshops as the primary channel to communicate and interact with the international community and UNESCO” (Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012). Since the first Beijing International Forum on ESD (hereafter the Beijing Forum) on ESD in 2003, around 8,000 people have attended the Beijing Forums, including over 100 international ESD officials and professional from 50 countries and IGOs such as UNESCO, OECD, UNICEF, and UNEP participated in the Forums (G. Shi et al., 2013). During the Beijing Forums, the UNESCO professionals and international and Chinese experts demonstrated UN and UNESCO documents on ESD, exchanged international practice and new research findings of ESD, and discussed the international trend and direction of ESD (G. Shi et al., 2013). Consensus was reached on a number of ESD topics and strategies such as implementation of quality education during the forums (Beijing Consensus, 2011). Through years of practice, the National Committee found that the conference mechanism was one of the fundamental ways of promoting the ESD project in China. It perceived the organization of international conferences as a good opportunity to “disseminate the important content of UNDESD,” and “effectively spread the practical Chinese experience of localizing ESD in China” (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a).

Facilitating ESD-related policy development

In the development of the Chinese education, educational policy plays an essential role; it is allocates educational resources that are fundamental in the Chinese educational development (Huang, Luo, & Shan, 2007; F. Liu, 2003; Yuan, 1996). The interview and document data of this study demonstrate that the ESD-related policy

development is considered as both an integral component of the ESD concept in China and an essential area in which the ESD project has influence. As The National Working Committee for ESD in China (2010) summarized, “public education policy and government involvement is the key of the promotion of ESD in China” at all levels. Moreover, several experts of the National Committee also confirmed in interviews that government’s policy support is “key” in sustaining the ESD project in China (e.g., Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012; Sun, personal communication, February 28, 2013).

The ESD research and practice in schools and the policy proposals helped transfer the ESD work in China from ideas into educational practice and policies across China, from large cities like Beijing and Shanghai to relatively remote areas in Xuzhou, Honghu (Hubei province), etc. (G. Shi & Han, 2012). For example, in 2007, with the consultations from the National Committee, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education issued the first municipal-level ESD policy—the *Guidelines for Carrying out ESD in Primary and Secondary Schools in Beijing* (hereafter Guidelines on ESD in Beijing). It laid out the guiding principles, objectives, main contents, and approaches to implement ESD in schools in Beijing, and served as a core policy document for principals and teachers to practice ESD in schools in Beijing (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a).

2010 was an exciting year for the ESD development in China due to the explicit emphasis on ESD in China’s national education strategy—the National Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020⁶⁰ (hereafter the National Education Outline 2010-2020). ESD was thus formally

⁶⁰ The National Education Outline (2010-2020) is the blueprint of the Chinese education development from 2010 to 2020. It is the most influential national policy document in education in 2010-2020.

incorporated into Chinese national education policy and gained its legitimacy as a “strategic theme” in the national plan (G. Shi, 2011a). The Vice Minister of Education L. Liu (2011) highlights the significance of this “milestone” event in his speech. He celebrated, “the integration of ESD in the national education strategy marked that ESD has been adopted into national public educational policy and will become a guiding concept for Chinese educational reform and development in a relatively long period” (L. Liu, 2011). Besides, the officials in the Ministry of Education are discussing a new national action or specific policy on the further developing ESD in China (X. Wang, 2014). Additionally, local (municipal, district- and school-level) policies were adopted for the promotion of ESD in local schools⁶¹.

Through the adoption of ESD concept in national and local policies, the ESD discourse is being legitimized and institutionalized in the Chinese education system. According to a schoolteacher in Pingguoyuan Middle School, “the incorporation of ESD in school’s 12th Five-Year Plan provides legitimacy and support for us [teachers] to implement ESD work in practice⁶².” The adoption of the ESD policies demonstrates that ESD in China does not stop at theoretical development, but can be “transformed to government policies” (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a, p. 44). As it is directly related to the allocation of educational resources (F. Liu, 2003), the ESD policies may further promote the educational practice and the development of educational theories in China (G. Shi & Han, 2012). In the interview, Sun (personal communication, February 28, 2013) insightfully noted,

⁶¹ Under the direction of China’s 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) and guidance of the National Committee, ESD-related policies were incorporated into some district-level and school-level educational plans, e.g., *Haidian District Educational Development Plan during the 12th Five-Year Plan* and *Pingguoyuan Middle School Educational Development Plan during the 12th Five-Year Plan*.

⁶² This is from my field notes after my personal communication with Bei, a schoolteacher in one ESD Model School in Beijing, on July 10, 2012.

When ESD policy is in place, it may give impetus to the innovation and development of educational practice and even the philosophy of education. The educational policy is not just a hollow policy... it deepens the educational theory and practice and influence the implementation of the project in a profound way.

The extent to which the ESD project in China has impacted Chinese education is beyond the scope of this dissertation and needs to be studied in future research. In this study, however, I would like to note that the aforementioned specific strategies and policy development, to some extent, facilitate changes in the educational practice of schools in different regions in China, such as the development of the over 1,000 Chinese ESD Schools and ten ESD Experimental Districts, ESD-related curricular development, new practices of teaching and learning methods, ESD extracurricular thematic activities, the integration of ESD idea in school philosophy of a number of ESD schools and districts, etc. (Lee & Huang, 2009; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a; J. Zhang, 2016).

Furthermore, a number of studies show that the ESD project in China has enhanced individuals' knowledge and learning capacity in some ESD schools; and it helps students form values, life styles, and behaviors that suit sustainable development of the society and human beings⁶³ (Han, 2015; G. Shi, 2011a; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a, 2010). Such changes in educational practice, in turn, may provide experiences for schools to learn from and showcase the “fruits” and influence of the ESD project in China (G. Shi et al., 2013; L. Shi, 2010b). At the same time, they may help justify the significance of the ESD concept in contributing to the Chinese educational development and thus become

⁶³ Additionally, the ESD project not only enhances students' skills and knowledge, but also improves teachers' capacities and professional development in ESD schools (G. Shi et al., 2013); The new teaching and learning approach especially seems to help a number of teachers in ESD schools realize the importance of changing roles in teaching through daily practice (G. Shi et al., 2013; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2010, p. 13). An interviewee echoed, “the training and classroom demonstrations to a great extent enhance the ESD skills, capacities and professional development of the teachers and principals” (Feng, personal communication, May 8, 2012).

important evidence and continuous impetus for policy change and in-depth development in the educational philosophy in China.

Knowledge Flows from the Local/ National to the Global

As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, in the context of globalization, the time and space compression eases the circulation of flows⁶⁴ of knowledge and influence across multiple scales. In the ESD project, through the interactions of actors at multiple scales, flows of ESD knowledge and influence get carried back and forth across boundaries among the ESD stakeholders in UNESCO and China; resources are shared across global, national, and local levels. This not only facilitates knowledge flows from international to Chinese stakeholders, but also enables the bottom-up participation of local and national stakeholders in international knowledge exchange and policy conversations. Meanwhile, as I have explained in the first section of this chapter, Chinese government actively pursues engaging in global governance and exerting its influence on global issues. Participating in the international ESD-related affairs aligns well with this state-level strategy. By actively interacting with diverse stakeholders, the National Committee seeks to participate in the international ESD policy agenda and expand its influence in the international ESD community.

One essential way for the National Committee to advocate the Chinese ESD knowledge and experience is through ESD-related research and publication. The Chinese ESD experience was collected and published in UNESCO publications (Han, 2015). Additionally, the National Committee published and shared several country reports on ESD development in China with UNESCO. For example, the Country

⁶⁴ Borgatti et al. (2013, p. 4) distinguish interactions with flows and point out that “flows are the outcomes of interactions, and interactions form the medium that enables things to flow; and flows may be intangibles, such as beliefs, attitudes, norms, and so on, that are passed from person to person. They can also consist of physical resources such as money or goods.”

Report: Preparing new Citizenship for Sustainable Development: Decade review of ESD in China was published in English and Chinese and shared at the 2009 Bonn Conference (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a). From 2009 to 2011, moreover, in cooperation with the UNESCO Beijing Office, the National Committee conducted a number of case studies and research on the ESD progress in China and produced three country reports⁶⁵. By doing so, the ESD knowledge and ideas flow in two ways, which facilitates the interactive “flows” of ESD knowledge and ideas between UNESCO and China.

Moreover, the National Committee is passionate about building closer relationships with international networks and UNESCO professionals (The National Working Committee for ESD in China). The National Committee recognizes that bringing international professionals together with Chinese ESD stakeholders in ESD conferences can help convene international experts, “borrow” the successful ESD experience from the international communities, and disseminate Chinese experience to international communities (G. Shi & Han, 2012; G. Shi et al., 2013; The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a). As a result, in recent years, the National Committee has invited an increasing number of professionals from UNESCO Headquarters and field offices and the influential international experts to share knowledge and experience with Chinese stakeholders, such as Leicht⁶⁶, Hopkins, McKeown⁶⁷ and the UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development and author of the 2012 DESD report *Shaping the Education of*

⁶⁵ For example, *Report on School Case Studies on ESD in China* (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2009a), *Advance the Construction of High-Quality Schools in Basic Education through ESD* (The National Working Committee for ESD in China, 2010)

⁶⁶ Leicht is the current Chief of the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters.

⁶⁷ Rosalyn McKeown is the author of many UNESCO ESD publications. She worked in the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters for two years. She is also the Secretary of the CRTE.

Tomorrow—Ajren Wals etc. (Wu, personal communication, May 9, 2012; Sun, personal communications, May 7, 2013).

Furthermore, the Chinese ESD stakeholders began to utilize the Chinese ESD knowledge and experience to exert influence over the international policy domain. In 2012, connecting over 1,000 practitioners of the Chinese ESD schools, the National Committee submitted a policy proposal to the Director-General of UNESCO based on China's experience in ESD. In the proposal, the Chinese stakeholders made several suggestions to UNESCO regarding the DESD agenda after 2015. Sun (personal communication, May 28, 2012)⁶⁸ perceived this proposal to the Director-General of UNESCO as an “attempt” for the National Committee and China to advocate the Chinese ESD experience, “feed back” to UNESCO, and engage itself in the ESD knowledge sharing and agenda setting in UNESCO.

However, the Chinese ESD stakeholders' feedback to UNESCO is still considered as “ripples across the pond” (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013) that may not have immediate influence yet. During my interviews with multiple ESD stakeholders in China, the interviewees also identified several challenges that they faced in promoting the Chinese ESD project internationally. For instance, they realized that language barriers remain an obstacle for them to interact with people from different cultures at the international stage, and for other people to develop a more in-depth understanding of their work (Interview with Wu, May 9th, 2012). They also see limited Chinese influence on UNESCO's policymaking process. The challenge in promoting the Chinese ESD experience internationally was also echoed

⁶⁸ This is an excerpt from the personal communication between Shi and the research on their way to a meeting in the MOE in Beijing. It was recorded with consent from Shi.

in a number of articles published by ESD researchers and practitioners in China (G. Shi, 2016a; J. Zhang, 2016).

In spite of the challenges, interviewees of this study underscored the importance of “feeding back” the local knowledge to the global sphere because “when the ripples cumulate, they may have impact on the waves of the pond” (Ren, personal communication, April 29, 2013). For example, Sun (personal communications, June 9, 2012, May 7, 2013) stressed,

We [the National Committee] hope the successful cases in the ESD project in China can be known by the international society. We truly believe that the feedback of local ESD experience in countries like China would be beneficial to educational innovation and development of the international family.

This finding echoes what I discussed in chapter 2. Actors from all scales could potentially be involved in the governing process and exert influence across these multiple scales. I will discuss the diverse actors in the following section.

The above two sections demonstrate the process and mechanisms used in understanding (“chewing”) and implementing (“feeding”) the UNESCO ESD project in Chinese education. The data show that the National Committee was proactively researching and transferring the UNESCO ESD idea in China. The National Committee studies and links the UNESCO ESD idea with Chinese education, and designs an ESD framework based on the Chinese context. It then localizes the Chinese framework through specific mechanisms, which brought changes in policy development and educational practice in Chinese education. When looking at the mechanisms UNESCO and Chinese actors use, it is not difficult to find that the methods utilized by these various actors in the ESD project are quite similar, namely through agenda/policy setting, publications/documents, capacity building workshops, international exchange and cooperation, networks, etc. These mechanisms, as indicated in chapter 4, are all *soft* in nature in the sense that they do not wield any

financial or direct control over others. A process of “chewing” and “feeding” through soft mechanisms, in particular, facilitates the flows of knowledge among the different actors in global education governance (GEG). Furthermore, the interactions of actors at multiple scales promote the two-way flows of knowledge and influence between the international ESD stakeholders and the Chinese ESD stakeholders. Increasingly, the Chinese ESD stakeholders are seeking to actively engage in GEG process.

To put the implementation of the ESD ideas in the GEG perspective, in the remaining sections of this chapter, I attempt to showcase how diverse actors play their roles in the process of UNESCO’s soft governance as well as the “chewing” and “feeding” in China, and connect the key GEG concepts of actors, mechanisms, networks, space of flows across scales, and shift of location of authority (highlighted in chapter 2).

Diverse Actors and Roles in the Network Governance

In previous chapters, I demonstrated that the UNESCO ESD project could not be simply implemented by one single actor; instead, it called for the engagement of various actors in the interactive flows of space, which engendered the global governance characterized as network governance. Specifically, I questioned if the forms of educational networks formed in the ESD project represented features of global educational governance. In this section, I return to this question discussed in chapter 4, situate it in the “chewing” and “feeding” process of implementing the ESD project in China, and further unpack the governance process.

The data of this study reveal that the various actors in the ESD project in China have actively engaged in exerting their distinctive influences in the global educational governance practice, formed multiple types of networks, and steered the direction of the ESD policy and practice at different scales. Consequently, the

different actors play their distinct roles and function differently in the formation of ESD network. Studying the actors and their roles allows us to depict a more detailed picture of the ESD project and answer the research question regarding how relevant actors govern educational policy and practice in the case of ESD in China and how features of global educational governance are enacted in this process.

I briefly describe the roles of different actors in the ESD project and their functions in Table 5-1. All these actors, from UNESCO, to the Chinese government, the national committee, and the individual policy elites, are part of the large networks of the ESD project. As the scope of the study is mostly set at the transnational and national levels, Table 5-1 focuses mainly on the actors at these two levels without extending its analysis to the local actors such as schoolteachers and principals. The four types of the actors I analyze in Table 5-1 are UNESCO, the Chinese government, the National Committee, and the knowledge workers. In the following, building on the GEG framework, I discuss their roles in implementing the ESD project in China.

Table 5-1 Roles and Functions of the Main Actors in the ESD case in China

Actors	Roles	Functions
UNESCO	An orchestrator that exercises indirect and soft governance <i>“A lab of ideas,” a knowledge hub, an international platform.</i>	“To serve,” <i>not</i> “to direct”: set global norms and agendas, develop and broke knowledge and ideas, build capacity, and bring actors together for common goals.
Chinese Government/ Chinese Natcom	A coordinator that attempts to act proactively in global governance <i>“Window, medium, and bridge”</i>	Planning, policy and political support, monitoring, supervision, review and coordination, funding source, etc.
The National Committee	Local-based but globally linked implementer <i>“Hands and feet”</i>	Knowledge disseminator, connection between national and local scales, connection between research and policy and practice, etc.
Knowledge Workers	Information collector, knowledge producer and disseminator <i>“Eyes and ears”</i>	Develop and broke knowledge and ideas, think tanks, reference groups, Monitoring and Evaluation, etc.

UNESCO: An orchestrator “to serve”

A number of scholars such as Du (2011b), Jones (2007b), and Mundy (2010) acknowledge that UN agencies such as UNESCO are an important global governor in the international community. UNESCO also sees itself as a crucial actor in global governance (Bokova, 2011; UNESCO, 2011b). What, then, is UNESCO’s role in global educational governance (GEG) and how does it exert its influence at a distance?

Kenneth W. Abbott, Genschel, Snidal, and Zangl (2012) and Posthuma and Rossi (2017) argued that the roles of international organizations (IOs) as orchestrators, which mobilizing actors to participate in global governance. The role of an orchestrator is highlighted in findings of the case of UNESCO ESD project. Ren (personal communication, April 30, 2013), for example, noted, “UNESCO has an official role for the DESD as the coordinator globally.” Sun (personal communication, April 29, 2013) stated that “UNESCO does not have the direct control over the leaders of its member states, ministers of education or any nation state.” In short, as Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013) highlighted, “*UNESCO is there to serve; it’s not there to direct.*”

UNESCO’s orchestrator role is reflected in being a global institution that provides “software” ((Bokova, 2011). The earlier discussions of this dissertation explicated UNESCO’s *soft mechanisms* in GEG (chapter 4) and UNESCO’s interaction with the ESD Chinese stakeholders (chapter 4 and the first half of chapter 5). In particular, I have pointed out that UNESCO is *not* equipped with the necessary organizational and financial resources to promote the ESD project globally. Over the years, scholars and policy actors have acknowledged UNESCO does not act as a world government; it has no direct control over any nation state, organization or individual (Bhola, 1989; KokkalisProgram, 2010). The data of the current study

confirmed UNESCO provides little financial resources in the implementation of the ESD project and normally does *not* act as “an aid agency” in educational governance in this project (Li, personal communication, July 31, 2012; Lang, personal communication, August 10, 2012; Yang, personal communication, May 11, 2012). UNESCO’s advantages, according to the data of this study, seem to lie in its ability to broker knowledge and ideas, to set global norms and standards, to build capacity, as well as its convening power in bringing actors together for common goals.

Existing literature also highlights that IOs exercise governance through indirect approaches by providing *material* (such as financial or administrative assistance) and *ideational* support (such as technical expertise, formal approval or political endorsement) to intermediaries or implementing actors (Kenneth W. Abbott et al., 2012). UNESCO orchestrates policy directions mainly through an *indirect* approach. As chapters 4 and 5 show, UNESCO seldom carries out the on-the-ground ESD work in member states or local communities. UNESCO’s soft mechanisms are mostly at *macro-level* (international and sometimes national scales); it does not have the resources to implement policy and guide practices in the local communities or schools. When implementing the ESD idea at the national and local scales, according to interviewees, UNESCO provides materials and ideational support, especially research and endorsement to Chinese actors; and it is mainly the Chinese ESD actors that proactively connects the idea within Chinese contexts and localizes it in Chinese schools with specific strategies (Ren, personal communication, April 30, 2013; Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013; Sun, personal communication, February 28, 2013; Feng, personal communication, May 8, 2013). Sun (personal communication, February 28, 2013), for example, emphasized, “UNESCO has a general framework

and guidance to the international ESD development. But it basically has no specific assistance on the details of implementing the ESD project in China.”

As I demonstrated in chapter 4 and the previous sections of this chapter, UNESCO mainly works with the Chinese stakeholders that are highly driven to work on the ESD project for several reasons, all of which tap into their own needs in protecting China’s increasingly deteriorated environment, exploring the possible approach of the ongoing educational reform, and exerting China’s influence on the international stage. These actors that UNESCO identifies usually bring human and material resources in a particular geographic area into the implementation of the project, which complements well with the strengths and weaknesses of UNESCO’s approach. Particularly, the central government in China holds much institutional authority and political power. In a highly centralized state like China, this allows the government to mobilize a variety of different resources from NGOs, local governments, schools, teachers, and students. Through working with these national and local actors, UNESCO has successfully orchestrated and transferred a global initiative to local practice in China.

This indirect and soft nature of UNESCO’s role manifested in the ESD case distinguish this governance mode from the traditional hierarchical governance, which exercises influence directly through hard instruments such as sanctions or political orders. Networks across scales, as previously highlighted, play a key role in such governance process. As I argue in chapter 4, with its intellectual resources and broad connections, UNESCO is able to exert its influence at multiple scales; it brings resources and various actors together in promoting the flows of knowledge in the global educational space, and consequently governs educational issues at a distance. In facilitating the flows of knowledge, accordingly, UNESCO appears to act as a

knowledge hub that boosts the circulation of international ESD knowledge worldwide and pulls flows of knowledge and resources into its use. The functions of a knowledge hub, ideally, are “two-way” (Ma, personal communication, August 17, 2012; Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013). UNESCO convenes flows of ESD knowledge to the Chinese stakeholders while it also solicits local knowledge from the Chinese ESD stakeholders.

In summary, in promoting the ESD project in China, UNESCO governs indirectly and softly. By promoting networks and flows of knowledge across scales, UNESCO orchestrates the grand production of the symphony revolving around the theme of ESD; by strategically identifying the key members in this creation and dissemination process, it makes sure that the sound produced at the center of the international stage resonates at different corners of the world.

The Chinese government: A coordinator that acts proactively in governing

Nation states are one of the key stakeholders responsible for promoting ESD in national and local context (UNESCO, 2006a, 2006b). Nation states, as Ren (personal communication, April 29, 2013) stressed in an interview, were primarily “responsible for implementing ESD” at national and local scales. As I have discussed in chapters 2 and 4, existing literature has noticed that nation states are *no longer* the exclusive actor in the process of the ESD promotion. The national government is sometimes just “one player among many (Goldsmith and Eggers (2004).” This is indeed true in the case of implementing ESD in China. In addition to the involvement of the central government and its agents, multiple actors have participated in the ESD project, such as the national committee (a government-sponsored NGO), the knowledge experts, and so on.

What, then, might be the role of the nation state (i.e., the Chinese government) in the process of global educational governance (GEG) as disclosed in the ESD case? Specifically, I highlighted in my analysis in chapter 4 that UNESCO identifies the key change makers in China on the national scale, which includes the central government but also other types of organizations. This analysis thus set up the examination of the role of the state in its activities on two directions, the vertical and the horizontal connections. Vertically, it is important to look at how the central government works with the International Organizations such as UNESCO, as well as its local government branches. Horizontally, I explore the working dynamics among the state, the NGOs, and knowledge experts. My analysis shows that in the case of the ESD project, the Chinese government remains an authority in major decision-making and policy-making processes, but it also lends certain authority to other organizations such as the National Committee and knowledge workers. The analysis demonstrates that the nation-state engages in the ESD governance process through a combination of soft and hard power while still using its hard bureaucratic power at its core.

Scholars such as Dale (2007) strongly argue that the role of the nation state in the new form of governance has changed from a role “where the state did it all” to a situation where “the state has become the coordinator of coordination.” Such a role of the nation state is manifested in this study. The data show that the Chinese government plays the roles of a coordinator, supervisor, and facilitator in the ESD project in China. On behalf of the Chinese government, the Chinese Natcom facilitates the implementation of the ESD project in a variety of ways, such as providing financial support, monitoring, entrusting, and appointing collaborative NGOs, making policies, and hosting professional training activities, etc. Vertically, the Chinese Natcom is “a window, a medium, and a bridge” in transferring an

international idea to local practice (Sun, Personal communication, May 7, 2013).

Because the Chinese Natcom, a Chinese government organization housed in Ministry of Education, has a Permanent Delegation to UNESCO in Paris, it is easier for the Chinese Natcom to communicate with UNESCO and get first-hand information.

When there is an official request, new policy or official information, UNESCO usually sends it through a number of channels. One primary channel is to send to the Chinese Natcom. As a medium or a bridge, the Chinese Natcom is indispensable in sending UNESCO's message to individual schools and communities and helping the local institutions reach UNESCO. By doing that, the Chinese Natcom effectively engages in UNESCO's governing process. As one official in the Chinese Natcom, Yang (personal communication, May 11, 2012), stated,

The cooperation [between UNESCO and Chinese actors] must go through the Chinese Natcom. When the Chinese Natcom has UNESCO projects, it will carry forward the project (Tui Xia Qu; 推下去). Normally, it is the Chinese Natcom and its entrusted organizations that work with local actors to carry out the UNESCO projects, not UNESCO... If they need consultancy and help from the [international] experts and UNESCO, the Chinese Natcom will invite the experts to the schools and universities.

The vertical implementation of the ESD project also requires the horizontal coordination. Particularly for the Chinese Natcom, appointing certain organizations to implement the UNESCO projects is one way the Chinese Natcom coordinates and mobilizes non-governmental resources. When asked how the Chinese Natcom works to carry out the UNESCO projects at the initial stage, Yang (personal communication, May 11, 2012) answered,

Generally, it's like that. For many years, we have had certain organizations we often cooperate with. If there is a UNESCO project, we will communicate with the leaders of the organizations to see if they are interested in the project, and if they are capable of implementing the projects. If the organizations agree to do the project, we will then issue an official document (Xia Wen; 下文). Of course we will then get positive answer from the organizations. After that, it is ok."

That is, when UNESCO has a new project or policy to be implemented in China, the Chinese Natcom will contact and consult with its cooperative organizations, and then issue an official document to entrust or commission the organizations to carry out the UNESCO projects in China. The appointment of the National Committee as the main focal point in China followed this process.

As highlighted by Rizvi and Lingard (2010), the various non-governmental actors enjoy increased flexibility in managing international and local issues. This is observed in the case of ESD project in China. Under the Chinese Natcom's relatively flexible direction, the ESD project enjoys "relatively high levels of autonomy and independence" (Lee & Huang, 2009, p. 122). The establishment of non-governmental organization such as the Beijing Association of ESD, the Secretariat of the ESD project, and the setup of ESD Research Center and the local committees and communities are all examples of the Chinese government's flexibility in implementing ESD work⁶⁹. This gives the National Committee legitimate access to different sectors and building networks with diverse actors. Through this process, the Chinese Natcom lent part of its authority and gave official recognition to the National Committee. This shift of authority from nation states to other actors requires that the actor in question still conform to the goals and targets set by the government. Under the direct leadership of the Chinese Natcom, the National Committee could execute the task assigned by the Chinese Natcom via the centralized and hierarchical bureaucratic system of the government.

⁶⁹ The Beijing Association of ESD, for example, can avoid some of the bureaucratic rules set by the government and "be more efficient" in "mobilizing various resources, including human resources, experts, and funding" (Sun, personal communication, March 8, 2014). The Beijing Association of ESD, additionally, may "provide more autonomy" for the National Committee while maintaining its tie to the government; it has the freedom to cooperate with actors in governments, NGOs, private sector, community, etc. (Sun, personal communication, March 8, 2014).

As I highlighted chapter 2, some scholars argue that the new form of governance and shift of authority have created the hollowing out of state (Rhodes, 1996) and fostered the rescaling of statehood (Brenner, 2004). In the case of the ESD project in China, the shift of authority from the Chinese government to other actors did *not* mean that the process was hollowing out the state. Rather, as Ball (2008) noted, it is the mixing of hierarchy and networks to reinforce one another so that the governing bodies can achieve the best possible outcomes. The Chinese government remains the ultimate authority over the implementation of the ESD project. It utilizes policy and political support as key methods to maintain its authority in educational governance. As presented in chapter 4, the Chinese government incorporated the concept of ESD into its most influential educational document, the National Education Outline 2010-2020, which officially legitimized ESD discourse in the Chinese education system. At the same time, the high-level officials' participation in the ESD conferences and events and their involvement in ESD publications are all indications of political support from the Chinese government. With the bureaucratic control and policy support, the Chinese government retains its authority in key decisions of the ESD project (Li, 2018). Many times, to organize activities or events, the National Committee will submit a request to the Chinese Natcom and wait for approvals. For example, to host a local workshop for teachers in the EPD schools in Beijing, The National Working Committee for ESD in China (2002b) needed to present a detailed time and agenda of the workshop and obtain an approval from the Chinese Natcom. To approve this request, the Chinese Natcom issued official documents to ask the lower-level governmental branches to coordinate with the National Working Committee. In other words, to turn the horizontal coordination into vertical implementation, the National Committee loops the task back into the

bureaucratic system and asks for the coordination of different levels of the government to ensure goals set by the Chinese government are met.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government appoints diverse organizations to carry out the ESD project, support the project with relevant policies and much needed financial resources, and also uses its bureaucratic machine to coordinate and monitor, as well as to mobilize local resources. The National Committee provides human resources and administrative support for the implementation of the project and builds networks with IGOs, NGOs, the private sector, the research community, schools and individuals (more will be discussed later). Returning to the questions of the role of the nation-state in the new global educational governance framework, I argue that, although more diverse actors have been engaged in global educational governance than were previously involved, in the case of implementing ESD in China, the central government still plays a significant supervising and coordinating role using its bureaucratic and institutional authority. In the context of China, this approach has been highly effective, as the ESD discourse has been incorporated into policy documents and local educational practice. In the following section, I put the role of the Chinese government and the National Committee in the perspective of network governance and unpack this further.

The National Committee: “Local-based but globally linked” “hands and feet”

Borrowing authority from the government, the National Committee has become the major body in executing the ESD project at the national scale. In the words of some interviewees, the National Committee plays a role of “*locally based but globally linked*” “*hands and feet*” in implementing the ESD Project in China (Cao, personal communication, May 1, 2013; Sun, personal communication, February 28, 2013). As presented in the previous sections, the National Committee employs a

specific set of strategies, such as “chewing” and “feeding,” to link the UNESCO ESD idea with the Chinese education. It also disseminates the localized knowledge through research and publication, ESD-related curriculum development and ESD schools and districts, capacity building workshops, as well as international exchange. This reflects the view of scholars who argue that networks and governance are inherently interconnected in the sense that networks play a role in exerting influence, setting directions, and changing behaviors (Padovani & Pavan, 2016; Parker, 2007). By examining the various strategies and approaches taken up by the National Committee, this study finds that it relies heavily on networks in exerting influence over the ESD project in China.

First, the National Committee builds a variety of networks, such as the Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD or API-ESD, and networks for experience sharing and professional development among school principals (e.g., the Principal Studios), teachers (e.g., ESD Experts), ESD schools networks (e.g., ASPnet). Such networks play a vital role in promoting an international concept into local knowledge and practice. As Cao (personal communication, May 1, 2013) stated in the interview, an important driver of establishing networks such as the API-ESD, is that ESD stakeholders, especially the international professional and knowledge workers, did not want to “stop with the research” and would like to “actually do something” on the ground. While maintaining its strong connections with UNESCO and the international community, API-ESD focuses mainly on local practice and hands-on experience and is able to mobilize local resources and reach more teachers, students and schools on the ground.

Linking this with the discussion in chapters 4 and 5 and with network literature, in the case of the ESD project, networks among UNESCO, Chinese

government, the National Committee, and others create a *space of flows of knowledge*, through which governance of the ESD project encompass governments, involving a variety of actors at multiple levels. By sharing flows of knowledge and connecting research and practice in such interactive space of flows, the National Committee connects UNESCO and the Chinese government with the various actors, becoming their “hands and feet” on the ground (Ren, personal communication, April 20, 2013; Sun, personal communication, February 28, 2013). As Sun (personal communication, February 28, 2013) passionately denoted,

UNESCO professionals and MOE officials can relax and enjoy some tea and read newspaper while an international concept [ESD] being adopted and assimilated at local level [in China]. Of course, it's not that easy. But they [the National Committee and its networks] make the ESD project more ‘connected with the ground work’ (Jie Di Qi; 接地气) and build regular relationships with local educational departments, schools, forming a very smooth channel of communication.

If the Chinese government builds the bridge that connects UNESCO and China's local educational practice and maintains the authoritative and bureaucratic control over the high level decisions on the project, it is the National Committee and its networks who bring back-and-forth traffic on this bridge and localize the project in schools and districts. In other words, through the work of the National Committee, UNESCO and the Chinese government can steer and facilitate the ESD project on the ground and, meanwhile, “relax and enjoy some tea and read newspaper.” Therefore, in the ESD project, the National Committee obtains the authority to create rules and regulations for the project, as well as mobilizing and allocating human and financial resources in the transnational move revolving around ESD. Despite the certain authority the National Committee enjoys in network governance, as I pointed out in the previous section, bureaucratic and hierarchical control of the Chinese government is still the fundamental governing mechanisms in the ESD project. That is to say, the emergence of network governance does not posit the fading of state power or

traditional hierarchical governance (as shown in the previous section on the role of Chinese government). As the majority of current literature speaks optimistically on the effect of network governance yet pays relatively less attention to how network governance is practiced in countries with more centralized systems, such as China. This is an emergent finding during the study of this dissertation that goes beyond the original scope of the study. However, it brings in a unique perspective to the existing literature on network and global governance and is worth studying further in future research project (as highlighted in the future research topics in chapter 6).

Knowledge workers: The “eyes and ears” in governance

Knowledge workers encompass experts working at different levels of the ESD project implementation, from the international, to national, and local levels. For instance, Hopkins and McKeown primarily work for the UNESCO and their expertise influences the agenda setting and discourse formation of the ESD project at the international level. Meanwhile, Shi (whose role I will further elaborate) and other Chinese knowledge workers focus on the ESD project implemented within the territory of China. A major difference between the two types of experts lies in the primary stakeholders that they serve. UNESCO is the primary stakeholder for many of the international knowledge workers, the national level experts in China work closely with the country’s central government, local governments and schools, teachers and students. These actors interact with each other and various other actors through UNESCO’s collaborative mechanisms and activities such as publications, research, expert networks, international conferences and workshops, international cooperation and exchange (as shown in the previous chapter and earlier in this chapter). They are the “*eyes and ears*” of the implementation of the ESD project (Ren, personal communication, April 31, 2013). Flows of ESD knowledge are exchanged

and produced with these interactions, through which the ESD idea was first developed by ESD experts or knowledge workers at global scale, got endorsed by the UN, and then localized by ESD experts in China and implemented in the Chinese education policy and practice.

Therefore, such flows of knowledge on the ESD ideas and practice among knowledge workers are an essential feature in the global educational governance. In his dissertation, Du (2010c) identifies the development and dissemination of ideas as a main basis of global educational governance. In the ESD case, as Sun (personal communication, February 28, 2013) summarized, “The educational ideas themselves are one of the most important element in global governance. The development of the ESD ideas in China is a process of UNESCO deepening its influence on Chinese education practice.” The core expert team in China started with research and pilot projects on ESD and gradually transferred the UNESCO ideas into local practice.

Shi is a representative at the national level, the leading expert of ESD and the person in charge of the National Committee. In chapter 4, I discussed how UNESCO strategically identifies key influencers in different countries and areas of the world to promote the ESD project. An ideal candidate of these authorities should have deep commitment to education and sustainable development, rich social and political resources, and impactful personal connections. Shi is such a key change maker in the Chinese context. He has committed himself to the promotion and implementation of the ESD project for decades without pursuing personal interests. His long-term, consistent engagement in the project ensures the project’s stability and continuous development in China. Meanwhile, he has built a broad and stable network with state-level government officials in China, international knowledge workers, and local practitioners. In the last chapter, I compared the types of networks formed in

centralized and non-centralized states and pointed out that, in a centralized state like China, national level institutions become the key node in the network. In this sense, Shi is the person who significantly facilitates the formation of the key node. Centering on this key node, the National Committee led by Shi, other knowledge workers from the local, national, and international levels are also involved in the ESD project, producing flows of ESD knowledge and addressing pressing challenges. Besides, knowledge workers and networks they form serve as the think tanks of policy makers as they may legitimize and “determine[d] what is known about leadership, what needs to be known and who the trusted knowers are” through publications, speeches and panels, emails, etc. (Gunter, 2012).

In the context of China, knowledge workers such as Shi and his teams connect academia, civil society, local communities and schools, and policy makers. On the one hand, because Shi, his team, as well as other knowledge workers from various research institutions have participated in the implementation of the ESD project in a grounded way, they are much more aware of the needs, concerns, and pressing issues when implementing ESD in local schools and communities. On the other hand, these knowledge workers join the larger regional and international networks of experts through conferences, workshops, and publications, so they are well informed with the newest development of the ESD discourse and practice beyond China. Therefore, when educational policies need to be made at the national level, people like Shi bring the information they grasp to the policy makers and convince them the importance of adopting the ESD agenda.

Since the Chinese government wants to enhance its soft power on the international stage, many Chinese knowledge workers are also involved in translating and introducing ideas produced in different cultural contexts and disseminated by

UNESCO. Their international work, however, also conforms to the state agenda and aligns well with the goal of the state. As I have discussed previously, Chinese knowledge workers' ambition of engaging in the global discourse of ESD is not always successful. They are constrained by their educational background, languages, and a western dominant history of the discursive development of ESD. Despite these limits, their active participation in the conversation on ESD on the international platform has already drawn interest and attention from UNESCO and experts of other countries and areas (Interview with Charles, May 1, 2013). As "eyes and ears" of the project, they are still the important information collectors and interpreters, knowledge producers and disseminators, networkers, as well as policy consultants for the promotion of the ESD project in and beyond China.

Summary

In this chapter, I illustrated the process of promoting the UNESCO ESD project in China as a process of the National Committee "chewing" the UNESCO ESD idea and then "feeding" it into the Chinese educational system. This captured the process through which an international concept such as ESD is studied and understood by the National Committee, then piloted and localized based on the national and local contexts, and finally adopted in schools using specific strategies, which, consequently, yield changes in educational practice and policy.

The case of implementing the ESD project in China reveals some unique features of global educational governance, especially when the main actors involved are UN institutions such as UNESCO and the centralized government such as the Chinese government. Firstly, although UNESCO lacks sufficient financial, organizational, and human resources, it still manages to realize GEG by navigating softly and indirectly. Secondly, the study also demonstrates that national level

stakeholders often interpret an international organization's global initiative based on its own cultural and political contexts. As such, their decision to engage in GEG is influenced by a set of complicated interests, which are sometimes very different from the original intention of the international organization. Third, in alignment with the previous literature on GEG and network governance, networking across multiple scales and involving various types of actors has played a significant role in disseminating ESD knowledge and implementing the project in China.

In this process, Chinese actors such as the Chinese government and also other national and local actors are attempting to exert influence over international policies and practice through facilitating the flows of knowledge from local/national to international, building extensive networks of experts, and other approaches. This is a feature of global education governance that this study observes. This study has also documented the emergence of other actors such as knowledge workers, NGOs, and individual policy elites in the making of GEG. However, the study also found that, in a state with a highly centralized government like China, traditional bureaucratic governance remains a strong motivator for the promotion of ESD despite the rise of network governance. This emergent finding, in particular, brings in a new insight to the existing literature on network governance and GEG, as most of the current literature pays relatively less attention to how network governance is practiced in a non-western context such as China.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Using the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) project in China as a case, this study explores the practice of global educational governance (GEG) with a focus on the interaction among key actors involved in the promotion of ESD at the global and national scales. It unpacks four research questions: (1) how UNESCO engaged itself and exerted influence in the promotion of the ESD Project in China; (2) how and to what extent the ESD project is promoted at the national level through the collaboration between UNESCO and Chinese stakeholders; (3) how and to what extent UNESCO and the relevant Chinese actors governed educational policy and practice in the case of ESD in China; and last but not least, (4) how and to what extent the process of promoting the UNESCO ESD ideas in China appears to represent features of emerging GEG.

To address these questions, I conducted a qualitative study to collect document and interview data. I drew upon 18 interviews from UNESCO and China for the UNESCO ESD Project, including professionals at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (8 interviews) and policy actors and practitioners at the Chinese Natcom and National Committee (10 interviews). I analyzed numerous documents, including publications, unpublished internal documents, meeting notes, records of activities, policy documents, budgets, legal imperatives, and any other relevant documents available at each research site. In With the permission of my research participants, I also collected data on the correspondence of stakeholders in UNESCO and the National Committee, e.g., emails, letters, fax, which provided me valuable information on the daily practice of GEG.

The findings of the study are illustrated in chapters 4 and 5 highlighting the governance process at the global and national scales respectively. In the following, I

will summarize the major findings of the study. Drawing on the key findings, I make a list of practical suggestions for key actors in the UNESCO ESD Project. I then explain the limitations of the study and outline a number of topics for future research.

Summary on Key Findings

The study on the UNESCO ESD project in China adds to the existing education and governance research by confirming a number of findings from previous studies while also demonstrating the unique case in China challenges some scholars' views in the governance literature.

To address the first research question on UNESCO's promotion of the ESD project, especially its interaction with Chinese actors, I found that **UNESCO plays the role of an orchestrator that exercises indirect and soft governance**. UNESCO is not equipped with the necessary organizational and financial resources to promote the ESD project globally. As such, UNESCO serves as a hub to develop and spread ESD knowledge, sets rules and norms for the global implementation of the project, and provides an international platform to bring actors together for common goals. In light of its limited resources and in hopes of being a global actor, UNESCO utilizes soft mechanisms, strategically identifying and working with impactful national and local actors. This is evident in the ESD project, as UNESCO has shown its keen understanding of the centralized educational system in China and focuses on working with the Chinese national level actors, particularly impactful knowledge workers such as Shi and policy makers such as Du. Through bringing such key Chinese actors into the global network of educational governance, UNESCO navigates its promotion of ESD project, softly promotes knowledge and ideas in the interactive space of flows, sets up new norms and rules, builds the capacity of other actors, and defines the possible future direction of education globally.

In order to unpack the second research question on the promotion of the ESD project at the national scale, I dive deep into the localization of the ESD Project in China and analyze the “chewing” and “feeding” process, namely, the adoption of the ESD discourse and the conduct of the ESD practice. In alignment with the existing discussion on GEG, my findings are aligned with other authors who suggest that **nation-state is no longer the sole player in the governing process**. For example, International Organizations, NGOs, knowledge workers, and others play important roles in the governing process. The Chinese government, as I have shown in my analysis in chapter 5, is an active coordinator in global educational governance led by UNESCO. It offers multiple sources to the development of the ESD project in China, and monitors, supervises, and coordinates its implementation. The Chinese government builds the bridge connecting UNESCO and China’s local educational practice. It appoints diverse organizations to carry out the ESD project, support the project with relevant policies and much needed financial resources, and also uses its bureaucratic process to coordinate and monitor, as well as to mobilize local resources. Meanwhile, the Chinese government grants the National Committee the implementing authority of ESD and carry out the project through the “hands” and “feet” of the National Committee.

My research shows that non-governmental actors (such as National Committee) and knowledge workers have emerged as crucial players in the ESD project. These actors are instrumental in interpreting the ESD discourse and localizing the ESD practices in Chinese schools, a process that I called “chewing” and “feeding” in chapter 5. For instance, my analysis shows that the National Committee is the most important organization appointed by the Chinese government to implement the ESD project. As mentioned briefly earlier, the analysis reveals the

crucial role of the National Committee—the “hands and feet” of UNESCO and Chinese government in “carrying out the functions and missions on ESD issues” (Shi, persona communication, February 28, 2013). In the implementation process, the non-governmental actors enjoy certain flexibility and autonomy on the ground, but they also need to align their work closely with the expectations and regulations of the central government. In the context of the ESD Project in China, such interaction among the government and non-government actors has been proven quite effective in promoting the project, as the ESD discourse has been incorporated into policy documents and local educational practice.

The third research question on the governance of educational practice in the ESD project in China leads me to the observation that **the governance mechanisms used in this case are mostly soft**. In the ESD Project, the soft mechanisms UNESCO and the National Committee utilize include agenda and norm setting, publications and raising awareness, capability building, conferences, networks, international cooperation and exchange, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the projects, etc.

In particular, the analysis reveals that **networks help actors gain horizontal and vertical access to various resources, extend outreach, and amplify influence, facilitating the flows of knowledge among actors at different scales**. As highlighted in chapters 4 and 5, building a multitude of networks has become one of the main mechanisms for UNESCO and Chinese ESD actors to engage in transnational conversations on ESD and to implement ESD in China. In the context of a highly centralized government in China, although networks grant certain flexibility, critical decisions regarding the implementation of the project are ultimately approved at the national level. As a result, the rise of the network governance in the ESD case

does not mean the fall of more conventional governance based on hierarchy and bureaucratic institutions. As a matter of fact, network governance and bureaucratic governance to some extent may reinforce each other through the Chinese actors in promoting the ESD project.

Through the soft mechanisms and especially through networks, actors in the governance process of the ESD project generate the interactive flows of space with knowledge and experience. For instance, the study found that, in addition to promoting the ESD project within China, the various Chinese actors proactively exert their influence beyond the boundary of the nation-state. This is shown in their pursuit of “feeding” the Chinese knowledge about ESD back into the global flows of knowledge and exerting influence over global discourse and policy. However, despite the observation on the increasingly visible and active role of Chinese actors at the global stage, in the case of ESD Project, China’s influence is a “ripple in the pond,” or quite limited. Therefore, on the one hand, my study noted that the flows of knowledge and experience are interactive in nature and thus cannot be fixed in a one-dimensional or directional framework. And through the interactive flows of knowledge, local actors have been attempting to engage in the governance process of global topics. On the other hand, the study also reveals that it has still been challenging for non-western actors (such as the Chinese actors) to advocate their own voices and participate in the governance practice on the global stage. Further study is therefore needed to help better understand how local actors in non-western nations may exert their influence at a distance and participate in the global educational governance.

The fourth research question drives attention specifically to the emerging global educational governance. In this study, I argue that **the ESD case is an instantiation of the global educational governance in practice (chapter 4) and the**

understanding of GEG can be further refined by considering the practice and experience of stakeholders in countries with strong state control, such as contemporary China (chapter 5). The implementation of the ESD Project in China manifests some key features of this new form of global educational governance. In chapters 4 and 5, I develop a multi-layered discussion to demonstrate this point, from the formulation of the Chinese ESD discourse and the creation of Chinese ESD related policies, to the implementation and organization of the ESD project. GEG in this case entails practice and interactions of a number of actors such as UNESCO, the Chinese government, the National Committee, knowledge workers, and others, exerting influence on and setting directions of ESD policies and practice at a distance through a wide range of mechanisms.

The study thus brings new insight into the current governance literature by developing an analysis of the shift of the location of authority in the process of global educational governance. Given the international nature of the ESD Project and involvement of actors across multiple scales, the formation of networks and “flows of knowledge” in the ESD Project is gradually shifting the location of authority of governance to multiple scales, going beyond the Chinese government. This study observes that in the “chewing” and “feeding” of the ESD Project, the Chinese government lends part of its authority to other relatively new actors, such as knowledge workers and NGOs—the National Committee and Beijing Association of ESD. The Chinese government and its partners, including individuals and organizations, work together to shape the implementation of the ESD project. However, as I have noted in chapter 5, the emergence of the network governance and the inclusion of new actors does not necessarily bring with them the decline of the relatively traditional method of educational governance, which, in the Chinese context,

means the bureaucratic and hierarchical control of the government. Therefore, an important finding of this study thus lies in providing this unique perspective in the global educational governance structure to demonstrate that the collaboration between the multiple parties does *not* necessarily weaken the authority of the Chinese government or hollow out state authorship over educational policies or practice. Rather, it helps the Chinese government extend its outreach and accomplish goals on the ground with fewer resources.

Implications for UNESCO and Chinese Actors

As previously stated, the current study is based on one IGO (UNESCO) in one unique country (China) and one specific project (ESD Project). Therefore, it is not my intention to give a definition or model of global educational governance (GEG); nor is it my aim to establish a common framework for GEG. Rather, the study provides scholars and policy actors an example of how an IGO with limited resources together with other international and local actors may play a role in global governance and educational policy. In this section, based on the findings and discussion of this study, I delineate a number of implications and advice to UNESCO and Chinese actors to illustrate, along the lines of global educational governance, how practitioners can better understand and utilize networks and flows of knowledge, authority and diverse actors (such as knowledge workers) in the governance process.

First of all, UNESCO should consider amplifying its soft mechanisms and continue to cultivate extensive networks to further mobilize its resources and orchestrate new ideas and policies across scales. The withdrawal of funding from the US since 2011 has put UNESCO in fiscal shortage. As a “fallen princess” with limited financial resources, to wield more influence and impact over nation states and local actors, UNESCO should employ its soft mechanisms more systematically, create

and promote global agendas and best practices, increase capacity building activities, and strategically identify and work with impactful national and local actors to extend its networks and exert influence. This will position UNECSO to take advantage of its strength, which lies in its ability to broker knowledge and ideas, to set global norms and standards, to build capacity, as well as its convening power in bringing actors together for common goals.

Secondly, UNESCO might want to further explore how nation states adopt UNESCO ideas and policies for their own needs and interests, as well as how national level actors interact with local actors in the process. To amplify UNESCO's influence, it is critical that UNESCO can engage in different sectors and nation states at the early stages of the formation and promotion of ideas and policies. This will help UNESCO better understand the vast range of needs and voices at the national and local levels, and streamline its efforts to make the implementation smoother in the future. It will also give nation states and local actors a chance to voice out their ideas to UNESCO early in the project. By understanding and engage the national and local actors, it also help the actors have a sense of ownership towards the concepts and policies, which will in turn help with their “chewing” and “feeding” process on the ground.

Thirdly, both UNESCO and Chinese actors should identify the influential knowledge workers by creating in-depth networks and grant more authority to these elites. Knowledge workers are the “eyes and ears” of UNESCO and Chinese actors in the GEG process. Both UNESCO and Chinese actors need to encourage knowledge sharing between the global and the local, and between policy makers and knowledge workers. The ever-evolving technology advances and digital platforms offer people easily accessible, timely and low-cost methods to interact and share

knowledge. This borderless knowledge sharing can facilitate more global flows of new ideas and best practices, build common understandings, and develop better ground for collaboration.

Last but not least, the Chinese actors should conduct research and learn from the best practices of how non-western actors leverage International Organizations' influence and use this to build their soft influence. The Chinese government realizes that, in order to improve China's influence in global rule-making and agenda setting, it is crucial to encourage diverse actors, including international organizations, nation states, local actors, and even individuals, to increase their active participation in global governance in general, and GEG in particular (Du, 2011b). China's newfound approaches in UNESCO (as presented in chapter 1, e.g., sending secondees, organizing UNESCO conferences, and establishing funds-in-trust) are designated to fulfill the country's political interest of building soft power. However, China is still learning utilize this multilateral platform and engage UNESCO at the global scale. China needs to increase its international exchange and collaboration with UNESCO and its extensive networks.

At the national and local levels, Chinese government could give more recognition and resources to non-governmental actors and individual elites—the people who can help the Chinese government complete the projects effectively. More importantly, the Chinese government and the National Committee should play a more prominent role in bridging UNESCO with local actors in China, creating a healthy flow of knowledge, people, and ideas among them. This would benefit the actors of GEG at all levels.

Limitations of the Study

The present study may have limitations in three main aspects: the generalizability of the qualitative study, the role of the researcher, and the time limits of the core data.

First, the current study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative and even many quantitative studies often cannot avoid the issue of generalizability. Qualitative studies particularly continue to be criticized for the lack of generalizability (Myers, 2000; Stake, 2010). In this study, I use the instance of interactions between UNESCO and China in the case of the ESD Project to shed light on features of GEG. The work of UNESCO and China in the ESD Project may be different from the relationships of other IGOs and nations, such as the World Bank and the United States in the field of poverty reduction. The interactions of IGOs, nation states, NGOs, knowledge workers and actors may vary based on numerous factors such as their fields of work, the interests and status of these entities, as well as the political, economic and social conditions of an international environment. Therefore, the findings from studying UNESCO, China and other actors in the ESD Project may not be generalized to all IGOs, nation states and actors; nor should it be applied to all international projects or programs, as these projects are usually shaped in a certain time, place, space and context. Despite the limitation of generalizability, as shown in chapters 4 and 5, the findings and discussions of the present study may still, *to some extent*, showcase the various actors at multiple scales- IGOs, nation states, knowledge workers, policy actors— in educational policy and practice and embody important features of GEG.

Second, the role and values of the researcher are inherently relevant to the study. As a native Chinese who was born and raised in the Chinese culture, educated partly in the Chinese education system and trained in an American graduate

school, I myself have certain biases towards the perspectives of the project. I may overlook some of the themes in daily routine. I worked to be neutral in the data collection and analysis processes and my international experience working and living in seven different countries helped expand my horizon and think from a wide range of cultural and social perspectives. However, some inherent constraints were difficult to avoid. For example, I started my pre-dissertation field study from the Chinese Natcom, which was seen as a component of the Ministry of Education. Through the Chinese Natcom, I was able to access the National Committee easily as the Chinese Natcom is their supervising organization. On the other hand, it gave the staff of the National Committee the first impression that I was from “the top,” i.e., Ministry of Education. I made great effort to explain and show the staff that I was merely a researcher and doctoral student who was interested in the ESD Project and had no formal relation to the ministry. With time, I was able to help them understand the situation. However, since I maintained the connection with the Chinese Natcom, at the beginning of the study in 2011, the staff may perceive me as connected to the national government, which might have had influence on my role as a researcher.

Third, the current study has its time limitation as the main data (documents and interviews) was mostly collected in 2011-2014. By the time the dissertation was concluded in 2018, some data needed to be updated. To minimize the impact of time on the data, from 2011 till now, I keep regular communications with key stakeholders at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the Chinese Natcom as well as the National Committee in Beijing through both online and in-person methods, such as emails, LinkedIn, We Chat, phone calls and meetings. The main stakeholders (such as Shi) sent me key updates, reports and information on their activities regularly. The

consistent and ongoing communication helps minimize the time limitation of the data and study.

Future Research Topics

Currently, UNESCO and its Member States are still actively promoting and implementing the ESD Project. Through the transnational move of knowledge, materials, and social actors, people across the globe are increasingly connected with each other; decisions made in one place can impact the lives of others at distant parts of the world. However, I would also like to point out that the fieldwork of this dissertation was conducted in a time that many people were quite positive about globalization. Within a few years after I finished data collection, the optimistic attitude started to be gradually overshadowed by concerns over the global rise of populism, the trade war between the United States and China, as well as the crisis of international organizations. The world is changing much faster than my research could capture. What future studies should researchers and practitioners in UNESCO and China do to continue our exploration of the global governance and particularly the GEG? This study serves as a starting point for more research to be done. I am listing a number of potential topics here for more in-depth study.

First is the concept and practice of power in governance. “Governance”, as Barnett and Duvall (2005b) write, “necessarily entails power” (p. 44). Indeed, power is an essential element in conceptualizing GEG. The topic of power in global governance has been discussed by a number of scholars such as Nye (2004)’s concept on ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ power, Lukes (2005)’ three-dimensional view of power and Barnett and Duvall (2005a)’s taxonomy on power in global governance. Despite these studies, there is limited number of empirical studies on the power dynamics in the practice of this new form of global educational governance or how power evolves in

the new interactive space of flows where knowledge and networks play a central role. Studies are also needed on how nation states such as China attempt to exert power in this new form of governance and how various actors may entail certain types of power relations with others compared to the traditional political and bureaucratic form of power.

Second is to further unpack the interaction and relationship between China and multilateral organizations such as UNESCO, especially in the changing socio-political context. The current study sheds light on the historical development, rationale and current status of the UNESCO and China interaction. These were discussed quite briefly to provide context for the ESD Project and governance discussion. As mentioned previously, China is taking a more proactive role and aims to exert more influence in UNESCO. I would like to explore this further and see more studies that look the role China is playing in its relationship with multilateral organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank and others and how such interactions might evolve overtime with the fast-changing international political and economic landscapes. Furthermore, as indicated in chapter one, dependency theory especially the role of funding and financing in such a relationship can bring valuable insights and perspectives on unpacking the UNESCO-China interactions.

Networks and the influence of network governance should also be studied further. Networks and network governance are central to this discussion of the current study. In chapters 4 and 5, I went into detail on the networks and specific roles various actors played in the network governance. There is increasing awareness on the importance of networks in governing and exerting influence through multilateral organizations. Many questions remain to be explored, such as to what extent and how such influence is played out in global governance, how networks are created and used

at the local scale, and to what extent and how knowledge workers are playing an increasingly prominent role in the governance process.

The fourth topic could be on the impact or influence of UNESCO in Chinese education. This present study looks at the implementation of the UNESCO ESD Project in China. It does not provide insight on the impact or influence of the UNESCO project and idea in Chinese education. Therefore, the extent to which the ESD Project in China has impacted Chinese education could be studied in future research.

Finally, further studies on the involvement of the local actors would be interesting. As discussed in chapter 5, the UNESCO ESD Project in China is an important and interesting case of national and local actors' attempts in engaging with global governance. However, local actors such as schoolteachers, students, and communities were not further unpacked in this study. Even though they are important actors of the ESD Project, their practice of the ESD Project is different than the global and national actors involved. As the intended focus of this study was to explore the actors and contexts that have shaped the ESD Project at the international and national scales, local-scale actors were considered beyond the scope of the study. In the future research, therefore, it is certainly worth including the students' and teachers' experiences, which would provide additional insight into the nature and implementation of the GEG in practice.

Summary

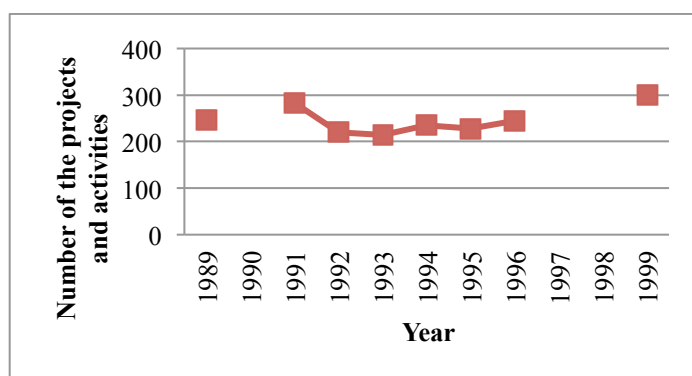
In today's world, governance, especially global governance, has become more controversial than ever. It calls for researchers and practitioners to develop a more sophisticated understanding of how global governance has shaped aspects of local policy and practice. My dissertation, as a whole, examines how a specific field of

global governance, the global educational governance, has manifested in certain educational projects and practices in a rapidly changing country, China. It offers a systemic look at how, in the case of the ESD project, the multiple actors at global and local levels are involved in GEG, how networks were formed, authority was shifted across scales, how the knowledge production process was restructured, and the new policies were introduced. It not only contributes to a more refined understanding about the interaction of IGOs and China, but also contributes to the studies of educational governance and globalization.

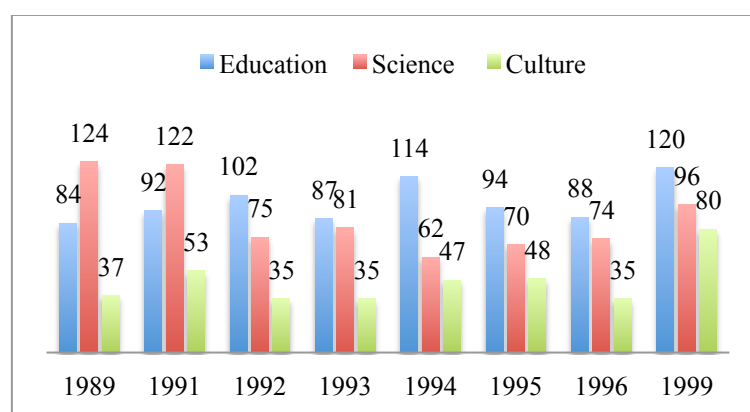
Appendices

Appendix 1 Figures on the numbers of projects and activities between UNESCO and China in 1989, 1991-1996, 1999⁷⁰

The Number of Projects and Activities between UNESCO and China, 1989, 1991-1996, 1999



The Number of UNESCO-China Projects and Activities of in Education, Science, and Culture Sectors, 1989, 1991-1996, 1999



⁷⁰ Source: Numbers extracted from the Annual Reports of Chinese National Commission (Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996).

Appendix 2 Interview Protocol for the Executive Director and Staff in the National Committee

Topic Domain 1: Work in the National Committee

1. Could you please tell me when and how did you get involved in the ESD project?
2. Could you please tell me about the work you do in the ESD National Committee?

Topic Domain 2: Interactions between UNESCO and the National Committee

Lead-off question:

1. Does the National Committee interact and cooperate with UNESCO in any way? If so, in what ways does the National Committee interact with UNESCO? Could you please give me some examples?

Possible follow-up questions:

2. Have you or your organization interacted and cooperated with UNESCO directly? If so, how did you interact with UNESCO on ESD issues?
3. How about UNESCO Bangkok Office and UNESCO Beijing Office? Any examples?
4. What approaches does the National Committee take to promote ESD in China?
5. In what ways does UNESCO help in the promotion of ESD in China?
6. What is the relationship between UNESCO and the National Committee in the promotion of the ESD project?
7. What role does UNESCO play in the interaction between UNESCO and the National Committee? [e.g., does UNESCO provide any funding for the implementation of the ESD project in China? How about technical assistance, like training, workshops, etc.?
8. I remember someone mentioned that the National Committee was the “hands” and “feet” of the Chinese Natcom and UNESCO in implementing ESD in China. What do you think about the role of the National Committee in implementing ESD in China?
9. Do you think the relationship of UNESCO and the National Committee has changed over the years? If so, what are the changes? What are the important factors that facilitated the changes?

Topic Domain 3: Negotiations (meaning-making) of the ESD ideas and practice

Lead-off question:

1. The experiences you shared were wonderful. I wonder how you understand the idea of ESD in China.

Possible follow-up questions:

2. Where did you learn the ESD ideas and practice?
3. Do you learn any ideas and practice from UNESCO? If so, in what ways do you learn from UNESCO’s ESD ideas (publications, training)?
4. What process or processes do you take to understand the UNESCO ESD ideas and apply it in the Chinese context?
5. Are there any similarity and/or difference between the ESD ideas in UNESCO and in China? How about in ESD practice, any similarity or differences? If there are differences on ideas and/or practice, why differ?

6. I sometimes think that the promotion of the UNESCO ESD project may be understood as a process of knowledge creation, dissemination, and assimilation. It seems like through such a knowledge creation, dissemination, and assimilation process, the ideas of ESD become an international discourse, and the national actors engage themselves in the international discourse and apply the discourse into practice, which in turn may create new knowledge and promote the discourse forward. As a distinguished scholar and practitioner in the ESD field, what do you think of this? How, in practice, are knowledge and discourse created and disseminated in the case of ESD? What is the role of UNESCO, the international experts, and the national and local actors in the process of knowledge production and dissemination?

Topic Domain 4: The influence of the Interactions

1. Has the UNESCO ESD ideas had any influence in the local schools in China? If so, what influence does it have and how?

Lead-off questions:

Possible follow-up questions:

2. Has the UNESCO ESD ideas influenced the Chinese education? If so, what influence does it make and how?
3. Has UNESCO had influence on the ESD project in China? If so, what influence does it make and how?
4. Why do you think ESD project has such influence in the local schools or the Chinese education? Could you please give me some specific examples?
5. I have heard the word soft in describing UNESCO's work and influence, what do you think of UNESCO's soft and "hard" work in the case of the ESD project in China?
6. What do you think people in the UNESCO ESD section may understand China's ESD work?
7. To what extent do you think China's ESD work has influenced UNESCO's ESD ideas? And what is China or the National Committee doing or what should China do to better promote China's influence internationally?
8. Has your participation in this ESD project had an impact on how you think about the roles of Chinese education practice and UNESCO in steering and shaping global educational policy and practice?

**Appendix 3 Interview Protocol for the UNESCO Professionals working closely
with China and the Chinese Loaded Staff (or Secondees) to UNESCO**

Topic Domain 1: Work in UNESCO

1. Could you please tell me when and how did you start to work for UNESCO?
2. Could you please tell me about the work you do in UNESCO?

Topic Domain 2: The Relationship between UNESCO and China

Lead-off questions:

1. Based on your years of experience working with UNESCO and China, how has the relationship between UNESCO and China been developing?

Possible follow-up questions:

2. How will you describe their current relationship?
3. Can you tell me about the ways in which UNESCO and the Chinese Natcom interact and cooperate with each other? What are the main areas and/project in the cooperation between UNESCO and China?
4. Have the ways of interaction between UNESCO and China changed? What are the changes? What factors do you think initiated the changes?
5. Do you foresee any change or trend in UNESCO-China cooperation in the future? What will they be?

Topic Domain 3: The influence of the UNESCO-China interaction

Lead-off questions:

1. Do you think that UNESCO's initiatives have influenced Chinese education? Can you give me some examples?

Possible follow-up questions:

2. Why do you think UNESCO has/ has not influenced Chinese education? What about the influence of the ESD Project in China?
3. We just discussed about UNESCO's influence in China. About China's influence on UNESCO's educational work? Do you think China has any influence on UNESCO's educational work? If so, what influence does it make and how? What do you think of the future trend of such influence?

Appendix 4 Interview Protocol for Officials in the Chinese Natcom

Topic Domain 1: Work in the Chinese Natcom in relation to education

Lead-off questions:

1. Could you please tell me about when and how you started to work for the Natcom?
2. I am interested in your experience working in Natcom. Could you please tell me what kind of things you normally do at work?

Possible follow-up questions:

1. Can you tell me about the ways in which UNESCO and the Chinese Natcom interact and cooperate with each other? What are the main areas and/project in the cooperation between UNESCO and China?
2. Have the methods of interaction between UNESCO and China changed? What are the changes? What factors do you think initiated the changes?
3. From your understanding, how has the relationship between UNESCO and China been developing? How will you describe their current relationship?
4. Do you foresee any change or trend in UNESCO-China cooperation in the future? What will they be?

Topic Domain 2: The implementation of UNESCO's projects in China

Lead-off question:

1. To your knowledge, how do UNESCO's educational projects and policies generally get promoted in China? How about the ESD Project?

Back up question:

2. To what extent do you think UNESCO's educational projects and policies have been implemented in China? And how do they get implemented?

Possible Follow-up questions:

3. Could you please tell me about the general procedure(s) in implementing the UNESCO's projects? Could you please give me an example in the case of ESD Project?
4. How do UNESCO and Chinese Natcom interact and cooperate in promoting UNESCO projects such as the ESD Project?
5. In what ways do the Natcom normally promote the UNESCO policies and projects in China?
6. What kind of actors actively involving in the carrying out UNESCO's education project in China? Can you give me an example?

Topic Domain 3: The influence of the UNESCO-China interaction

Lead-off questions:

4. Do you think that UNESCO's initiatives have influenced Chinese education?

Possible follow-up questions:

5. Why do you think UNESCO has/ has not influenced Chinese education? What about the influence of the ESD Project in China?
6. We just discussed about UNESCO's influence in China. Do you think China has any influence on UNESCO's educational work? What do you think of the future trend of such influence?

Appendix 5 Interview Protocol for UNESCO Professionals and Associated

Experts

Topic Domain 1: Background: their engagement with ESD and UNESCO

3. Could you please tell me when and how you got involved in the ESD project?
4. How did you get engaged with UNESCO's ESD work?
5. Could you please tell me about the work you do in relation to ESD?

Topic Domain 2: Interactions among Stakeholders

Lead-off question:

1. In what ways do you normally work with/ work for UNESCO in the promotion of the ESD project? Could you please give me some examples?

Possible follow-up questions:

2. You have extensive experience working with/for UNESCO and ESD. To your knowledge, is UNESCO in any way involved in the promotion of the ESD project in nation states such as China? If so, what are the approaches UNESCO takes to interact with national actors in the ESD project such as the National Committee in China?
3. What do you think is the relationship between UNESCO and the national actors such as National Committee in the promotion of the ESD project in China?
4. What roles does UNESCO play in the promotion of the ESD work internationally? How about in China?
5. What role do the national actors such as the National Committee play in the promotion of the ESD work in nation states? How about in China?
6. How could UNESCO better promote the ESD project in nation states like China?
7. I know you have been in contact with the ESD National Committee in China. In what ways do you interact with the ESD National Committee in China to promote the ESD in China?
8. Some scholars argue that in the globalized world, the expert teams or some call it the professional networks are becoming an important actor in educational policy and governance. What do you think is the role of the international experts (such as yourself) in the case of the ESD project?
9. How do the international experts form the networks in the case of ESD project? What is UNESCO's role in forming the networks and facilitating the interactions?

Topic Domain 3: Negotiations (meaning-making) of the ESD ideas and practice

Lead-off question:

1. The experiences you shared were wonderful. I wonder how you understand UNESCO's ESD ideas.

Possible follow-up questions:

2. How has UNESCO been developing its ESD ideas and practice?
3. In what ways does UNESCO disseminate its ESD ideas in nation states such as China?
4. You have learned the China's ESD ideas and visited the Chinese schools. Do you see any similarity and/or difference between the ESD ideas in UNESCO

- and in China? How about in the ESD practice, any similarity or differences? If there are differences in ideas or practice, where do the differences come from?
5. In what ways do the national ESD actors such as China learn the ESD ideas?
 6. From your knowledge, how do they apply the ESD ideas in practice?
 7. How does UNESCO help the national actors such as the National Committee apply the ESD ideas in educational practice?
 8. I sometimes think that the promotion of the UNESCO ESD project may be understood as a process of knowledge creation, dissemination, and assimilation. It seems like through such a knowledge creation, dissemination, and assimilation process, the ideas of ESD become an international discourse, and the national actors engage themselves in the international discourse and apply the discourse into practice, which in turn may create new knowledge and promote the discourse forward. As a distinguished scholar and practitioner in the ESD field, what do you think of this? How, in practice, are knowledge and discourse created and disseminated in the case of ESD? What is the role of the different actors, such as UNESCO, international experts, and the national and local actors in the process of knowledge production and dissemination?

Topic Domain 4: The influence of the ESD Project

Lead-off questions:

1. Do you think the UNESCO ESD project has any influence in the educational policy and practice of the nation states such as China? If so, to what extent do you think is the influence?

Possible follow-up questions:

2. Has the UNESCO ESD ideas influenced the Chinese education? If so, what influence does it make and how?
3. Why do you think the ESD project has such influence in nation states such as China?
4. I have heard the word soft in describing UNESCO's work and influence, what do you think of UNESCO's soft and "hard" work in the case of the ESD project? Could you please give me some specific examples?
5. Do you think UNESCO has had influence in in shaping educational policy and practice at different levels? Could you please give me some specific examples?
6. Do you think the national actors in China have had influence in UNESCO's ESD work? If so, what influence does it make and how?
7. Has your participation in ESD influenced your understanding of the roles of UNESCO and nation states in shaping educational policy and practice at different levels?

Appendix 6 Roadmap of the ESD Project in China (“2-1-3-3-2-3-4”)

2---- Two implications of the ESD idea

- ① Education should promote the sustainable development of the *society, economy, environment and culture*;
- ② Education should promote the sustainable development of the *individuals*.

1——One core Value for Sustainable Development—Four “Respects”

Respect for human development (including the present and future generations), respect for diversity, respect for the environment, and respect for the resources on the earth.

3——Three Basics to Learn

- ① Education of ESD Knowledge (Covering the four areas: society, economics, environment and culture).
- ② Education of Learning Capacity for Sustainable Development.
- ③ Education of Sustainable Lifestyles.

3——The Development of Curriculum at National, Local and School Levels

- ① National Curriculum s: to conduct experiments on teaching model for sustainable development
- ② Local Curriculum: to develop local courses of ESD and compile the textbooks
- ③ School-based Curriculum: to open courses in school and compile the textbooks

2——Two ESD Thematic Areas

- ① Resources and environment (The cultivation of a energy-saving and low-carbon lifestyle)
- ② Society and culture (The education of culture diversity or the education of international understanding)

3——The Construction of ESD Schools at Different Levels

- ① ESD Experimental Schools
- ② ESD Example Schools
- ③ ESD National Example Schools

4——Four Goals of ESD

- ① To reorient educational function in the society (For educational and administrative departments)
- ② To promote ESD school philosophy (For principals and school leaders)
- ③ To enhance teachers’ professional development (For teachers)
- ④ To improve students’ capacity (For students)

References

- Abbott, K. W., Genschel, P., Snidal, D., & Zangl, B. (2012). *Orchestration: Global Governance Through Intermediaries*.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2125452>
- Abbott, K. W., & Snidal, D. (2000). Hard and soft law in international governance. *International Organization*, 54(3), 421-456.
- Adamson, T. (2019). The U.S. and Israel Have Quit the U.N.'s Cultural Agency UNESCO, Accusing It of Bias. *Time*. Retrieved from
<http://time.com/5491285/us-israel-un-unesco/>
- Agger, A., Sorensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2008). It takes two to tango: When public and private actors interact. In K. Yang & E. Bergrud (Eds.), *Civic engagement in a network society* (pp. 15-40). Charlotte, NC: IAP-Information Age Publishing.
- Ahonen, P. (2001). *Soft governance, agile union ? Analysis of the extensions of open coordination in 2001*. Paper presented at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), Maastricht.
- Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2003). *Local Meanings, Global Schooling: Anthropology and World Culture Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Avant, D. D., Finnemore, M., & Sell, S. K. (2010). Who governs the globe? In D. D. Avant, M. Finnemore, & S. K. Sell (Eds.), *Who governs the globe?* (Vol. 114). Cambridge, UK ; New York Cambridge University Press.
- Baldwin, R. (2016). The World Trade Organization and the Future of Multilateralism. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 30(1), 95-116. doi:10.1257/jep.30.1.95
- Ball, S. J. (2008). New philanthropy, new networks and new governance in education. *Political Studies*, 56(4), 747-765. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2008.00722.x

- Ball, S. J. (2009). The governance turn. *Journal of Education Policy*, 24(5), 537-538.
- Ball, S. J. (2010). New voices, new knowledges and the new politics of education research: The gathering of a perfect storm? *European Educational Research Journal*, 9(2), 124. doi:10.2304/eeerj.2010.9.2.124
- Ball, S. J. (2012). *Global education INC.: New policy networks and the neo-liberal imaginary*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Ball, S. J., & Junemann, C. (2012). *Networks, new governance and education*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press
- Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., Braun, A., & Hoskins, K. (2011). Policy actors: doing policy work in schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(4), 625-639. doi:10.1080/01596306.2011.601565
- Ban, C., Seabrooke, L., & Freitas, S. (2016). Grey matter in shadow banking: international organizations and expert strategies in global financial governance. *Review of International Political Economy*, 23(6), 1001-1033. doi:10.1080/09692290.2016.1235599
- Barnett, M., & Duvall, R. (2005a). Power in international politics. *International Organization*, 59(01). doi:10.1017/s0020818305050010
- Barnett, M., & Duvall, R. (Eds.). (2005b). *Power in global governance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Barnett, M., & Finnemore, M. (2004). *Rules for the world: International organizations in global politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Beech, J. (2006). The Theme of Educational Transfer in Comparative Education: a view over time. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 1(1), 2. doi:10.2304/rcie.2006.1.1.2

- Beech, J. (2009). Who is strolling through the global garden? International agencies and educational transfer. In R. Cowen & A. M. Kazamias (Eds.), *International Handbook of Comparative Education* (pp. 341-357). New York: Springer
- Beijing Association of ESD. (2004). Constitution of the Beijing Association of Education for Sustainable Development (Revised version). Retrieved from http://www.esdinchina.org/_d271039846.htm
- Beijing Consensus. (2011). Education for Sustainable Development: The Path to Quality Education-5th Beijing International Forum on Education for Sustainable Development 2011 Consensus. Beijing.
- Bevir, M., & Rhodes, R. A. W. (2010). *The state as cultural practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bhola, H. (1989). Adult literacy: From concepts to implementation strategies. *Prospects*, 14(4), 479-490.
- Bhola, H. (1997). Adult education policy projections in the Delors Report. . *Prospects*, 27(2).
- Bloomberg News. (Aug 16, 2010). China Overtakes Japan as World's Second-Biggest Economy. Retrieved from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-08-16/china-economy-passes-japan-s-in-second-quarter-capping-three-decade-rise.html>
- Bodenheimer, S. (1971). Dependency and Imperialism: The Roots of Latin American Underdevelopment,. *Politics and Society*.
- Bogason, P. (2006). The Democratic Prospects of Network Governance. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 36(1), 3-18.
- doi:10.1177/0275074005282581

- Bogason, P., & Zølner, M. (2007). Methods for network governance research: an introduction. In P. Bogason & M. Zølner (Eds.), *Methods in democratic network governance* (pp. 1-20). Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bokova, I. (2011). *Global Governance in the 21st Century: A UNESCO angle*. Retrieved from Paris:
- Bonnett, M. (1999). Education for Sustainable Development: a coherent philosophy for environmental education? *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 29(3), 313-324. doi:10.1080/0305764990290302
- Borgatti, S. P., Everett, M. G., & Johnson, J. C. (2013). *Analyzing social networks*. Los Angeles [i.e. Thousand Oaks, Calif.] ; London : : SAGE Publications.
- Brass, J. N., Longhofer, W., Robinson, R. S., & Schnable, A. (2018). NGOs and international development: A review of thirty-five years of scholarship. *World Development*, 112, 136-149. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.07.016
- Bray, M., & Thomas, R. M. (1995). Levels of comparisons in educational studies: Different insights from different literatures and the value of multilevel analyses. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(3), 472-490.
- Brenner, N. (2001). The limits to scale? Methodological reflections on scalar structuration. *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(4), 591-614.
- Brenner, N. (2004). *New state spaces: Urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bromley, P., Meyer, J. W., & Ramirez, F. O. (2011). The worldwide spread of environmental discourse in Social Studies, History, and Civics textbooks, 1970–2008. *Comparative Education Review*, 55(4), 517-545.

- Buzan, B. (2010). China in International Society: Is 'Peaceful Rise' Possible? *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 3(1), 5-36. doi:10.1093/cjip/pop014
- Calleja, J. (1995). *International education and the university*. Paris: UNESCO & Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Carpenter, R. C. (2007). Setting the advocacy agenda: Theorizing issue emergence and nonemergence in Transnational Advocacy Networks. *International Studies Quarterly*, 51, 99-120.
- Carpenter, R. C. (2010). Governing the global agenda: "gatekeepers" and "issue adoption" in transnational advocacy networks. In D. D. Avant, M. Finnemore, & S. K. Sell (Eds.), *Who governs the globe?* Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Carspecken, P. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research: A theoretical and practical guide*. New York: Routledge.
- Carspecken, P. (2008). Critical research. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 171-175). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Castells, M. (2000). The Network Society. In D. Held & A. McGrew (Eds.), *The global transformations reader: An introduction to the globalization debate (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Castells, M. (2005). The network society: From knowledge to policy. In M. Castells & G. Cardoso (Eds.), *The Network Society: From knowledge to policy* (pp. 3-22). Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins Center for Transatlantic Relations.
- Castells, M. (2008). The new public sphere: Global civil society, communication networks, and global governance. *The Analysis of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 78-93. doi:10.1177/0002716207311877

- Castells, M. (2010). *The rise of the network society (2nd edition with a new pref.)*. Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA:: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chan, G., Lee, P. K., & Chan, L.-H. (2012). *China engages Global Governance: A new world order in the making?* Abingdon, Oxon; New York Routledge
- Chen, M., & Xiong, J. (2010). Promoting innovation and development cooperation: summary of the partnership with UNESCO Symposium. *World Education Information*, 27-31.
- Chen, X. (2008). Studying the Scientific Outlook of Development, Promoting ESD in China: Speech in the opening ceremony of the 9th National ESD Workshop.
- Chen, X. (2009). *Innovative Practice of the Education for Sustainable Development in China*. Beijing: Beijing Publishing Group.
- China. com. cn. National Five-Year Plans. Retrieved from <http://www.china.com.cn/chinese/zhuanti/wngh/1163433.htm>
- Chinese Government. (2016). *China's National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Beijing.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1989). *The 1989 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1991). *The 1991 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1992). *The 1992 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.

- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1993). *The 1993 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1994). *The 1994 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1995). *The 1995 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (1996). *The 1996 annual report of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2007). *Report of the Chinese Delegation on the 34th UNESCO General Conference*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2009a). *Country Report: Preparing New Citizenship for Sustainable Development (Decade review of ESD in China)*. Retrieved from Beijing
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2009b). *Country report: preparing new citizenship for sustainable development—decade review of ESD in China. Prepared for UNESCO World Conference on ESD*. Retrieved from
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2010). *The 2010 annual report and 2011 plan of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO*. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.

- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2011a). *A review on providing educational assistance to Africa through UNESCO*. Unpublished internal document.
- Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. (2011b). Working plan for UNESCO China-Africa University Leaders Meeting. In Chinese. Unpublished internal document.
- Coen, D., & Thatcher, M. (2007). Network Governance and Multi-level Delegation: European Networks of Regulatory Agencies. *Journal of Public Policy*, 28(01). doi:10.1017/s0143814x08000779
- Commission on Global Governance. (1995). *Our global neighborhood: the report of the Commission on Global Governance*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press
- Conca, K. (2015). *An unfinished foundation: the United Nations and global environmental governance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dale, R. (2004). Forms of governance, governmentality and EU's open method of coordination. In L. Wendy & W. William (Eds.), *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces*. Florence, KY, USA: Routledge.
- Dale, R. (2005). Globalisation, knowledge economy and comparative education. *Comparative Education*, 41(2), 117-149. doi:10.1080/03050060500150906
- Dale, R. (2007). Globalization and the rescaling of educational governance: A case of sociological ectopia. In C. A. Torres & A. Teodoro (Eds.), *Critique and Utopia: New developments in the sociology of education in the twenty-first century*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Dale, R. (2009). Context, constraints and resources in the development of European education space and European education policy. In R. Dale & S. Robertson

- (Eds.), *Globalisation and Europeanisation in Education*. Oxford Symposium Books.
- Dale, R., & Robertson, S. L. (2002). The varying effects of regional organizations as subjects of globalization of education. *Comparative Education Review*, 46(1), 10-36.
- Davies, J. S. (2011). *Challenging governance theory: From networks to hegemony*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Deakin, N., & Taylor, M. (2002). *Citizenship, civil society and governance*. Paper presented at the The Third Sector from a European Perspective Conference, IST European Network Meeting, Trento, Italy.
- Department of Publicity of the CCP. (2006). *Readings of the Scientific Outlook on Development*. Beijing Retrieved from <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/1026/4595353.html>.
- Dewey, J. (1915). *The school and society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dingwerth, K., & Pattberg, P. (2006). Global Governance as a Perspective on World Politics. *Global Governance*, 12(2), 185-203.
- Du, Y. (2002). EPD and the internationalization of education in China: Speech in the establishment ceremony of the National Working Committee of EPD in China.
- Du, Y. (2010a). Advocating the Chinese experience on ESD in the international community. Speech in the Chinese New Year gathering on ESD in Beijing
- Du, Y. (2010b). The ESD in China is entering a new historical stage. Speech in the closing ceremony of the 10th National ESD Workshop.
- Du, Y. (2010c). *Exploring global education governance: the practice of UNESCO*. (Ph. D.), Beijing Normal University, Beijing.

- Du, Y. (2011a). The internationalization of ESD. Speech in the Chinese New Year gathering on ESD in Beijing *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development in China*, 50(1), 8.
- Du, Y. (2011b). UNESCO and Global Educational Governance. *Global Education*, 40(05), 60-64.
- Du, Y., & Dong, J. (2006). The UNESCO-China cooperation in education. In C. N. C. f. UNESCO (Ed.), *The history of National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO*. . Beijing: Chinese National Commission for UNESCO.
- Engel, L. C. (2007). *Rescaling the state: The politics of educational decentralization in Catalonia*. (Ph. D.), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois.
- Engel, L. C. (2009). *New state formations in education policy: Reflections from Spain* (Vol. 39). Rotterdam, Boston, Taipei: Sense Publishers.
- Fang, M. (2010). Strengthen international cooperation for mutual benefit— UNESCO's cooperation with China. *Research in Educational Development*.(1), 8-12.
- Fang, T., & Lien, H.-T. (2012). China's International Aid Policy and Its Implications for Global Governance. Bloomington, IN: Research Center for Chinese Politics & Business.
- Farnham, N. (1986). Taking withdrawal from Unesco seriously *Comparative Education Review*, 30(1), 148-156.
- Ferraro, V. (2008). Dependency theory: An introduction *The development economics reader*.

- Finn, C. E. J. (1986). The rationale for the American withdrawal. *Comparative Education Review*, 30(1), 140-147.
- Finnemore, M. (1993). International Organizations as teachers of norms: The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and science policy. *International Organization*, 47(4), 565-597.
- Forster, J. (2016). Global sports governance and corruption. *Palgrave Communications*, 2, 15048. doi:10.1057/palcomms.2015.48
- Friedman, T. (2005). *The world is flat: A brief history of the twenty-first century*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1982). *Truth and method*. New York: Crossroad.
- Galaz, V., Tallberg, J., Boin, A., Ituarte-Lima, C., Hey, E., Olsson, P., & Westley, F. (2017). Global Governance Dimensions of Globally Networked Risks: The State of the Art in Social Science Research. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 8(1), 4-27. doi:10.1002/rhc3.12108
- Giddens, A. (1979). *Central problems in social theory : action, structure, and contradiction in social analysis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giddens, A. (2000). The globalizing of modernity. In D. Held & A. McGrew (Eds.), *The global transformations reader: An introduction to the globalization debate (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Gilchrist, A. (2009). *A networking approach to community development (2nd ed.)*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Gill, S., & Benatar, S. (2016). Global Health Governance and Global Power: A Critical Commentary on the Lancet-University of Oslo Commission Report. *Int J Health Serv*, 46(2), 346-365. doi:10.1177/0020731416631734

Globaledege. China: Economy. Retrieved from

<http://globaledege.msu.edu/countries/china/economy>

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*.

London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Gu, J., Humphrey, J., & Messner, D. (2008). Global Governance and Developing

Countries: The Implications of the Rise of China. *World Development*, 36(2),

274-292. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.06.009

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation*. London: Jossey-Bass.

Gunter, H. M. (2012). *Leadership and the reform of education*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Gupta, A., Pistorius, T., & Vijge, M. J. (2015). Managing fragmentation in global

environmental governance: the REDD+ Partnership as bridge organization.

International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics, 16(3),

355-374. doi:10.1007/s10784-015-9274-9

Han, Q. (2015). Education for Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Education: A

Status Report. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 9(1), 66-71.

Hartmann, E. (2010). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organisation: Pawn or global player? *Globalisation, Societies and Education*,

8(2), 307-318. doi:10.1080/14767721003780645

Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of*

cultural change. Oxford; New York: Blackwell.

Hass, P. M. (2004). Addressing the Global Governance Deficit. *Global*

Environmental Politics, 4(4).

- Held, D., & McGrew, A. (2002). Introduction. In D. Held & A. McGrew (Eds.), *Governing globalization : Power, authority and global governance*. Cambridge, UK :: Polity
- Held, D., & McGrew, A. (2003). The great globalization debate: An introduction. In D. Held & A. McGrew (Eds.), *The global transformations reader: An introduction to the globalization debate (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Henry, M., Lingard, B., Rizvi, F., & Taylor, S. (2001). *OECD, globalization and education policy*. Paris, France.: International Association of Univeristy Press.
- Hickey, S., & Mohan, G. (2004). *Participation: from tyranny to transformation*. London: Zed books.
- Hu, W. (2012). Thirty Years of Education in China: Between Change and No Change. *Chinese Education & Society*, 45(1), 84-94. doi:10.2753/ced1061-1932450110
- Huang, M., Luo, Z., & Shan, X. (2007). The establishment of public educational policy system in the process of educational mordenization. *Journal of Guangzhou University (Social Science Edition)*, 6(3), 63-66.
- Hüfner, K., & Naumann, J. (1986). Unesco: Only the crisis of a "politicized" UN specialized agency? *Comparative Education Review*, 30(1), 120-131.
- International Labour Organisation. (2011). *Skills for Green Jobs: A Global View*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Commission on Education and Communication. (2000). *Esdebate: International debate on education for sustainbale development*. Geneva: World Conservation Union.

- Iriye, A. (2002). *Global community: The role of international organizations in the making of the contemporary world*. Berkeley: LA: University of California Press.
- Iyengar, R., & Bajaj, M. (2011). After the smoke clears: Toward Education for Sustainable Development in Bhopal, India. *Comparative Education Review*, 55(3), 424-456.
- Jessop, B. (2003). Governance and meta-governance: on reflexivity, requisite variety and requisite irony. In H. P. Bang (Ed.), *Governance as social and political communication* (pp. 101-116). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Jiang, B., & Sun, W. (2003). The strategy of the internationalization of education in China. *Modern Distance Education*, 87(1), 21-23.
- Jickling, B., & Wals, A. (2007). Globalization and Environmental Education: Looking beyond Sustainable Development. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 40(1), 1-21.
- Jones, P. W. (2007a). Education and world order. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 325-337. doi:10.1080/03050060701556273
- Jones, P. W. (2007b). Global governance, social policy and multilateral education. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 321-323. doi:10.1080/03050060701556216
- Jones, P. W., & Coleman, D. (2005). *The United Nations and education: Multilateralism, deveopment and globalisation*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Karlsen, G. E. (2000). Decentralized centralism framework for a better understanding of governance in the field of education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 15(5), 525-538.
- Katz, H. (2005). *Global civil society and global governance: Co-opted or counter-hegemonic? Analyzing international NGO networks in the context of*

- Gramscian Theory*. (Ph.D.), University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles.
- Keck, M. E., & Sikkink, K. (1998). *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Keck, M. E., & Sikkink, K. (1999). *Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics*. Retrieved from Oxford; Malden, MA
- Kennedy, S., & Cheng, S. (Eds.). (2012). *From rule takers to rule makers: The growing role of Chinese in global governance*. Bloomington, Indiana & Geneva, Switzerland: Research Center for Chinese Politics & Business, Indiana University, and International Centre for Trade & Sustainable Development.
- Kickert, W. J. M., Klijn, E. H., & Koppenjan, J. (1997). *Managing complex networks: Strategies for the public sector*. London: Sage.
- King, K. (2007). Multilateral agencies in the construction of the global agenda on education. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 377-391.
doi:10.1080/03050060701556331
- Knill, C., & Bauer, M. W. (2016). Policy-making by international public administrations: concepts, causes and consequences. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 23(7), 949-959. doi:10.1080/13501763.2016.1168979
- KokkalisProgram. (2010). Irina Bokova - Global Governance in the 21st Century: The UNESCO Angle. : Harvard Kennedy School.
- Lamb, H. (1996). Global governance: Why?How?When? Retrieved from http://www.conspiracyarchive.com/NWO/Global_Governance_1.htm
- Lawn, M. (2002). Borderless education: Imagining a European education space in a time of brands and networks. In A. Nóvoa & M. Lawn (Eds.), *Fabricating*

- Europe: The formation of an education space* The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Lawn, M. (2006). Soft governance and the learning spaces of Europe. *Comparative European Politics*, 4(2/3), 272-288. doi:10.1057/palgrave.cep.6110081
- Lawn, M., & Lingard, B. (2002). Constructing a European policy space in educational governance: The role of transnational policy actors *European Educational Research Journal*, 1(2), 291-307.
- Lee, J. C.-K., & Huang, Y. (2009). Education for Sustainable Development projects and curriculum reform in China: The EEI and the EPD. In J. C.-K. Lee & M. Williams (Eds.), *Schooling for sustainable development in Chinese communities: Experience with younger children*. New York: Springer.
- Levinson, B. A. U., Sutton, M., & Winstead, T. (2009). Education policy as a practice of power: theoretical tools, ethnographic methods, democratic options. *Educational Policy*, 23(6), 767-795. doi:10.1177/0895904808320676
- Lewis, S. (2017). Policy, philanthropy and profit: the OECD's PISA for Schools and new modes of heterarchical educational governance. *Comparative Education*, 1-20. doi:10.1080/03050068.2017.1327246
- Lewis, S., Sellar, S., & Lingard, B. (2015). PISA for Schools; Topological Rationality and New Spaces of the OECD's Global Educational Governance. *Comparative Education Review*, 60(1), 27-57.
- Lewis Steven; Sellar, S. L., Bob. (2015). PISA for Schools: Topological Rationality and New Spaces of the OECD's Global Educational Governance. *Comparative Education Review*, 60(1), 27-57.
- Li, C. (2018). The Education for Sustainable Development and Chinese Experience. *Journal of Northwest Normal Univeristy (Social Science)*, 55(2).

- Limage, L. J. (2007). Organizational challenges to international cooperation for literacy in UNESCO. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 451-468.
doi:10.1080/03050060701556471
- Lindblad, S., Johannesson, I. A., & Simola, H. (2002). Education governance in transition: An introduction. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 46(3), 237-245. doi:10.1080/0031383022000005652
- Lindblad, S., & Lindblad, R. F. (2009). Transnational governance of higher education: On globalization and international university ranking lists. In T. S. Popkewitz & F. Rizvi (Eds.), *Globalization and the study of education*. Malden, MA, USA; Oxford, UK; Victoria, Australia: Wiley-Blackwel.
- Lingard, B. S., Sam. Representing Your Country: Scotland, PISA and New Spatialities of Educational Governance. *Scottish Educational Review*, 46(1).
- Liu, F. (2003). *The Value of Educational Policies*. Beijing: Education Science Press.
- Liu, L. (2011). Implementing the National Educational Outlines, Focusing on Education for Sustainable Development.
- Liu, L. (2012). ESD: The breakthrough of the cultivation of innovative individuals. Speech in the opening ceremony of the 6th Beijing Forum on ESD. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development in China*, 61(6), 4.
- Liu, Y., & Constable, A. (2010). ESD and lifelong learning: a case study of the Shangri-la Institute's current engagement with the Bazhu community in Diqing, China. *International Review of Education*, 56(2-3), 271-285.
doi:10.1007/s11159-010-9164-x
- Liu, Z., & Hu, Z. (2005). On the Opposite of Quality-oriented Education to Exam-oriented Education. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*(10).

- Lukes, S. (2005). *Power: A radical view (2nd Edition)*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ma, J. (2007). *The World Bank and Chinese higher education: The impact of the World Bank's programs, concepts, and strategies on Chinese higher education transformation*. (Master of Arts), University of Toronto, Toronto.
- McKeown, R., Hopkins, C. A., Rizzi, R., & Chrystalbridge, M. (2002). *Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit*.
- McNeely, C. L. (1995). Prescribing national education policies The role of international organizations. *Comparative Education Review*, 39(4), 483-507.
- Meidinger, E. (2017). *Mega-Regional Trade Agreements and Global Environmental Governance: The Case of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement*. Paper presented at the Symposium on Global Governance and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, University at Buffalo.
<https://ssrn.com/abstract=2943005>
- Monkman, K., & Baird, M. (2002). Educational change in the context of globalization. *Comparative Education Review*, 46(4), 497-508.
- Muetzelfeldt, M., & Smith, G. (2002). Civil Society and Global Governance: The Possibilities for Global Citizenship. *Citizenship Studies*, 6(1).
doi:10.1080/1362102022011875
- Mundy, K. (1998). Educational multilateralism and world (dis)Order. *Comparative Education Review*, 42(4), 448-478.
- Mundy, K. (1999). Educational multilateralism in a changing world order: UNESCO and the limits of the possible. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19, 27-52.

- Mundy, K. (2007). Global governance, educational change. *Comparative Education*, 43(3), 339-357. doi:10.1080/03050060701556281
- Mundy, K. (2010). "Education for All" and the global governors. In D. D. Avant, M. Finnemore, & S. K. Sell (Eds.), *Who governs the globe?* Cambridge, UK ; New York Cambridge University Press.
- Mundy, K., & Ghali, M. (2009). International and transnational policy actors in education *Handbook on Education Policy Research*.
- Murphy, C. N. (2000). Global governance: Poorly done and poorly understood. In R. Wilkinson (Ed.), *The global governance reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Myers, M. (2000). Qualitative Research and the Generalizability Question: Standing Firm with Proteus. *The Qualitative Report*, 4(3).
- Newman, J. (2001). *Modernising Governance: New Labour, Policy and Society*. London: Sage.
- Nóvoa, A., & Lawn, M. (2002). Introduction. In A. Nóvoa & M. Lawn (Eds.), *Fabricating Europe: The formation of an education space* The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Nóvoa, A., & Yariv-Mashal, T. (2003). Comparative research in education: A mode of governance or a historical journey? *Comparative Education*, 39(4), 423-438. doi:10.1080/0305006032000162002
- Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics (1st ed.)*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Omolewa, M. (2007). UNESCO as a network. *Paedagogica Historica*, 43(2), 211-221. doi:10.1080/00309230701248313

- Padovani, C., & Pavan, E. (2016). Global governance and ICTs: exploring online governance networks around gender and media. *Global Networks*, 16(3), 350-371. doi:10.1111/glob.12119
- Pan, Y. (2001). Individuals' sustainable development and educational transformation. *Educational Research*, 11.
- Parker, R. L. (2007). Networked governance or just networks? Local governance of the knowledge economy in Limerick (Ireland) and Karlskrona (Sweden). *Political Studies*, 55(1), 113-132.
- Patrick, S. M., & Thaler, F. F. (2010). China, the United States, and Global Governance: Shifting foundations of world order (T. C. I. o. C. I. R. (CICIR) & C. o. F. R. C. I. I. a. G. G. (IIGG)program, Trans.). Beijing, China.
- People Daily. (2017). One Belt and One Road: Bulding Soft Power is Needed. *People Daily*.
- Pescosolido, B. A. (2006). Sociology of social networks In C. D. Bryant & D. L. Peck (Eds.), *The Handbook of 21st Century Sociology* (pp. 208-217): Sage Publications.
- Popkewitz, T. S., & Rizvi, F. (2009). Globalization and the study of education: An introduction. In T. S. Popkewitz & F. Rizvi (Eds.), *Globalization and the study of education*. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell
- Posthuma, A., & Rossi, A. (2017). Coordinated governance in global value chains: supranational dynamics and the role of the International Labour Organization. *New Political Economy*, 22(2), 186-202. doi:10.1080/13563467.2016.1273342
- Qian, L. (2006). *Memory in the Permanent Delegation for UNESCO*
- Qiao, F. (2009). *Between the agenda of sustainable development and poverty relief*. Nanjing, China: Naijing University Press. .

- Raab, C. D. (1994). Theorising the governance of education. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 42(1), 6-22.
- Reinicke, W. H., Deng, F., & Martin, J. W. (2000). *Critical Choices : The United Nations, Networks and the Future of Global Governance*. Ottawa, ON, CAN: IDRC Books.
- Resnik, J. (2006). International organizations, the “education- economic growth” black box, and the development of world education culture. *Comparative Education Review*, 50(2), 175-195.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1996). The new governance: Governing without government. *Political Studies*, 652-667.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1997). *Understanding governance: : Policy networks, governance, reflexivity, and accountability*. Buckingham ; Philadelphia Open University Press.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (2007). Understanding governance: Ten years on. *Organization Studies*, 28(8), 1243-1264. doi:10.1177/0170840607076586
- Ritchie, J., & Spencer, L. (2002). Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In M. Huberman & M. B. Miles (Eds.), *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, Inc.
- Rizvi, F. (2009). Global mobility and the challenges of educational research and policy. In T. S. Popkewitz & F. Rizvi (Eds.), *Globalization and the study of education*. Malden, MA; Oxford; Victoria, Australia: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2009). The OECD and global shifts in education policy. In R. Cowen & A. M. Kazamias (Eds.), *International Handbook of Comparative Education* (pp. 437-453): Springer.
- Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2010). *Globalizing education policy*. New York: Routledge.

- Robertson, S. (2012). Placing teachers in global governance agendas. *Comparative Education Review*, 56(4), 584-607.
- Rodrik, D. (2001). The global governance of trade: As if development really mattered.
- Rosamond, B. (2001). Discourses of globalisation and European identities. In T. Christiansen, K. Jorgensen, & A. Wiener (Eds.), *The Social Construction of Europe* (pp. 158-173.). London: Sage.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1995). Governance in the Twenty-first Century. *Global Governance*, 1(1), 13-43.
- Rosenau, J. N. (2002). Governance in a new global order. In D. Held & A. McGrew (Eds.), *Governing globalization: Power, authority and global governance*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Rosenau, J. N., & Czempiel, E. (Eds.). (1992). *Governance without government: Order and change in world politics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Rutkowski, D. J. (2007a). Converging us softly: How intergovernmental organizations promote neoliberal educational policy. *Critical Studies in Education*, 48(2), 229-247.
- Rutkowski, D. J. (2007b). *Towards a new multilateralism: the development of World Education Indicators* (Ph.D.), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Sack, R. (1986). Unesco: From inherent contradictions to open crisis. *Comparative Education Review*, 30(1), 112-119.
- Sauvé, L. (1996). Environmental Education and Sustainable Development: A further appraisal. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 1, 7-34.
- Schensul, J. J. (Ed.) (2008). *Methods* (Vol. 2). Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Schmitt, T. M. (2009). Global cultural governance. Decision-making concerning world heritage between politics and science. *Erdkunde*, 63(2), 103-121.
doi:10.3112/erdkunde.2009.02.01
- Scholte, J. A. (2003). Civil Society and Democracy in Global Governance. *Global Governance*, 8(3), 281-304.
- Sharma, N. *Sphere of Influence: The importance of social network analysis*. Retrieved from
- Shen, J. (2009). *Research on the relations between China and UNESCO in education cooperation: From the perspective of Lifelong Education for All*. (Doctoral Dissertation), East China Normal University.
- Shi, G. (2008). Innovation characteristics of Education for Sustainable Development in China: To commemorate the project on ESD in China for ten years.
- Shi, G. (2010a). Enlightenment from Education for Sustainable Development in the new era. *Educational Research*, 364(5), 96-99.
- Shi, G. (2010b). The Fundamental concepts and operational pattern of ESD. In G. Shi (Ed.), *Advance the Construction of High-Quality Schools in Basic Education by Education for Sustainable Development*. (pp. 33-51). Beijing, China: UNESCO Beijing Office.
- Shi, G. (2011a). *Implementing the strategic theme, Promoting ESD*.
- Shi, G. (2011b). *Thoughts for Further Promoting ESD in International Society after UN-DESD*. Unpublished Internal Document.
- Shi, G. (2012). *New Conclusions from the UNDESD and challenges in China's ESD development: Some suggestions on the future of ESD in China after the Rio 2012 Conference*. Unpublished internal document.

- Shi, G. (2016a). Challenges ESD faces in China. Retrieved from http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016-02/17/c_128724782.htm
- Shi, G. (2016b). Recommendation to include Education for Sustainable Development in the 13th five-year education plan *Renming Zhengxie Net*. Retrieved from <http://www.rmzxb.com.cn/c/2016-02-17/700404.shtml>
- Shi, G., & Han, Q. (2012). *Brief review of Education for Sustainable Development Project in China*.
- Shi, G., & Han, Q. (June, 2012). Education for Sustainable Development: The Conceptualization and Implementation in China. *Presentation at the UNESCO Policy Review Workshop: Learning for the Future – Educating for Sustainable Development*. Jarkata, Indonesia: UNESCO Jarkata Office.
- Shi, G., Han, Q., & Ao, C. (2013). *Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in China: Effective Cases and Challenge*. Retrieved from Beijing:
- Shi, G., & Wang, G. (2006). *Basic Courses in Education for Sustainable Development*. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House.
- Shi, G., & Wang, Q. (2010). Promoting education for sustainable development in China. In UNESCO (Ed.), *Tommorrow today*. Leicester, UK: Tudor Rose.
- Shi, L. (2009). Reviewing the successful experience, promoting innnovative practice: A review of the 10-year development of ESD in China. In X. Chen (Ed.), *Innovative Practice of the Education for Sustainable Development in China*. Beijing: Beijing Publishing Group.
- Shi, L. (2010a). Effective coordination, platform building, follow-up research, advance in practice: Speech in the closing ceremony of the 10th National ESD Workshop.
- Shi, L. (2010b). *On the reform of education for sustainable development in China*.

- Shi, L. (2010c). Quality education and ESD: Presentation in the 10th National ESD Workshop.
- Shi, L. (2011). ESD becomes a fundamental component of quality education. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development in China*, 50(1), 3.
- Shi, Z., & Zhang, X. (2008). Education reform: Experience from China. *Journal of Beijing Normal University (Social Science)*(5), 22-32.
- Skukauskaite, A. (2012). Transparency in transcribing: making visible theoretical bases impacting knowledge construction from open-ended interview records. <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/rt/prINTERfriendly/1532/3330>
- Smith, N. (2003). Remaking scale: Competition and cooperation in pre-national and postnational Europe. In N. Brenner, B. Jessop, M. Jones, & G. MacLeod (Eds.), *State/Space: A reader* (pp. 227-238). Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Sobe, N. W., & Ortégón, N. D. (2009). Scopic Systems, Pipes, Models and Transfers in the Global Circulation of Educational Knowledge. In T. S. Popkewitz & F. Rizvi (Eds.), *Globalization and the Study of Education*. Malden, MA: The National Society for the Study of Education.
- Solana, J. (2015). China and Global Governance *Project Syndicate*.
- Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. New York: Guilford Press.
- State Council. (1994). *China's Agenda 21: White Paper on China's Population, Environment, and Development in the 21st* Beijing, China Retrieved from <http://www.acca21.org.cn/ca21pa.html>.
- State Council. (2001). *China's 10th Five-Year Plan on National Economic and Social Development*. Retrieved from

- State Council. (2006). *China's 11th Five-Year Plan on National Economic and Social Development*. Retrieved from
- State Council. (2011). *China's 12th Five-Year Plan on National Economic and Social Development*. Retrieved from
- Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2004). Blazing a trail for policy theory and practice. In G. Steiner-Khamsi (Ed.), *Global politics of educational borrowing and lending* (pp. 201-220). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Stoker, G. (2011). Was local governance such a good idea? A global comparative perspective. *Public Administration*, 89(1), 15-31.
- Stone, D. (2005). Knowledge networks and global policy. In D. Stone & S. Maxwell (Eds.), *Global knowledge networks and international development: Bridges across boundaries* (pp. 89-105). Tonbridge, Kent: MPG Books, Ltd, Bodmin.
- Sutton, M., & Levinson, B. A. U. (Eds.). (2001). *Policy as practice: Toward a comparative sociocultural analysis of educational policy*. Westport, CT: Ablex.
- Taylor, S., Rizvi, F., Lindgard, B., & Henry, M. (1997). *Educational policy and the politics of change*. London: Routledge.
- Teng, J. (2010). *Between Liberalism and Conservatism: Evolution of UNESCO's education policy discourse*. (Doctoral Dissertation), Beijing Normal University.
- The National Committee. (2014). Education for Sustainable Development: the Way towards High Quality Education *The first Asia-Pacific Expert Meeting on ESD and the launching of The Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD (API-ESD): the Recommendations to the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in 2014* Beijing, China.

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. *Brief introduction to the UNESCO ESD Project in China.*

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. List of names of the National Working Committee for the UNESCO EPD Project in China. Retrieved from http://www.esdinchina.org/_d271011362.htm

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2002a). *The Manual of the UNESCO EPD Project in China.* The National Working Committee for ESD in China. Beijing.

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2002b). *Request to the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO on organizing an EPD workshop for EPD school teachers*

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2003). *The main events in the development of the UNESCO EPD Project in China.* Unpublished internal document.

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2004). The main events in the development of the UNESCO ESD Project in China in 2004. Retrieved from http://www.esdinchina.org/_d270973408.htm

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2005). The main events in the development of the UNESCO ESD Project in China in 2005. Retrieved from http://www.esdinchina.org/_d270973409.htm

The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2009a). *Country Report: Preparing new Citizenship for Sustainable Development: Decade review of ESD in China.* Retrieved from Beijing:

- The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2009b). Decade of education for sustainable development in China. Beijing: The National Working Committee for ESD in China.
- The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2010). *Advance the construction of high-quality schools in basic education by ESD*. Beijing: The National Committee; UNESCO Beijing Office.
- The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2011). Education for Sustainable Development in China Experimental Manual (Trail Edition). Beijing National Working Committee for UNESCO ESD Project in China.
- The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2013a). *The Main Tasks of the ESD Project in China in the year of 2013*.
- The National Working Committee for ESD in China. (2013b). *The Proposal for the Establishment of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Education for Sustainable Development*
- The People.com.cn. The history of the Communist Party of China: "One central task and three basic points" Retrieved from <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64170/4467346.html>
- Thomas, C. (2001). *Global governance, development and human security: Exploring the links* (Vol. 22).
- Tikly, L. (2017). The Future of Education for All as a Global Regime of Educational Governance. *Comparative Education Review*, 61(1).
- Tilt, B. (2009). *Struggling for Sustainability in Rural China: Environmental Values and Civil Society*. . New York: Columbia University.
- Torring, J. (2005). Governance network theory: towards a second generation. *European Political Science*, 4(3), 305-315. doi:10.1057/palgrave.eps.2210031

UNESCO. UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Teacher Education towards Sustainability -
York University, Canada. Retrieved from

<http://www.unesco.org/en/esd/networks/working-group-of-unesco-chairs/canada/>

UNESCO. (20 July, 2011). *Report by the Director-General on the implementation of the UNESCO strategy for the second half of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)*. Retrieved from Paris:

UNESCO. (1945). *Conference for the establishment of UNESCO. Held at the Institute of Civil Engineers, London, from the 1st to the 16th November, 1945.*

Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001176/117626e.pdf>

UNESCO. (2005a). *The DESD at a Glance*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2005b). *Guidelines and recommendations for reorienting teacher education to address sustainability*. Paris: UNESCO

UNESCO. (2005c). *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) International Implementation Scheme*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2006a). *Framework for the UN DESD International Implementation Scheme*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2006b). *UNESCO Action Plan for DESD*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2007a). *Progress report by the Director-General on the UN DESD (2005-2014)*. Retrieved from Paris:

UNESCO. (2007b). *Report by the Director-General on new strategic orientations to the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. The UNESCO Executive Board 176 EX/10*. Retrieved from

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001499/149919e.pdf>.

- UNESCO. (2009a). *Bonn Declaration Outcome Document of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development 31 March-2 April 2009*.
- UNESCO. (2009b). *Review of Contexts and Structures for Education for Sustainable Development*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2010a). *DESD Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (GMEF) Phase II*. Retrieved from Paris:
- UNESCO. (2010b). *DESD Section Review*. Unpublished internal document.
- UNESCO. (2010c). *Education for Sustainable Development Lens: A Policy and Practice Review Tool*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (Producer). (2010d, 2013). *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/index.html>
- UNESCO. (2010e). *UNESCO Strategy for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development: Supporting Member States and other stakeholders in addressing global sustainable development challenges through ESD*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2011a). *Climate Change Starter's Guidebook: An issue's guide for Education Planners and Practitioners* Paris: UNESCO/UNEP.
- UNESCO. (2011b). *Disaster Risk Reduction and Education Internal UNESCO Resource Pack*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2011c). *Education for Sustainable Development: An Expert Review of Processes and Learning*.
- UNESCO. (2012a). *Education for Sustainable Development Sourcebook*. Paris: UNESCO.

- UNESCO. (2012b). *Scales of assessments and currency of member states' contribution for 2012-2013 (36 C/34)*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2012c). *Shaping the education of tomorrow: 2012 full-length report on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2012d). *Shaping the education of tomorrow: 2012 report on the DESD*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2012e). *UNESCO Constitution (2012 edition)*. Paris: UNESCO Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002161/216192e.pdf> - page=7.
- UNESCO. (2013a). 60 years of existence for the Associated Schools Network. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/dynamic-content-single-view/news/happy_birthday_aspnet/-_UkhqM2Sifk0
- UNESCO. (2013b). Revised List of Conferences and Meetings by Programme for 2012-2013. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2014). *UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved from Paris: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230514e.pdf>
- UNESCO. (2018a). *Education for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals Policy Brief* Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230514e.pdf>
- UNESCO. (2018b). GAP Partner Networks. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/gap/partner-networks>
- UNESCO's Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (2018c).
- UNESCO Bangkok. (20 January, 2006). *Guidelines for the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of Science Programme for Sustainable Development*.

- UNESCO Bangkok. (2008). *ESD on the move: National and Sub-regional ESD initiatives in the Asia-Pacific Region*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok.
- UNESCO Climate Change Education Clearinghouse. (2013). UNESCO Climate Change Education Clearinghouse online database.
- UNESCO Press. (March 2, 2011). China signs Funds-in-Trust Agreement with UNESCO to support Education Development in Africa. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/singleview/news/china_signs_funds_in_trust_agreement_with_unesco_to_support_education_development_in_africa/.
- UNESCO. org. How we work. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/about-us/how-we-work>
- UNESCO. org. Mission of UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/en/unitwin/mission/>.
- UNESCO.int. List of the 195 Members (and the 8 Associate Members) of UNESCO Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/member-states/countries/>.
- UNESCONews. (1997). UNESCO'S EPD Project: Educating for a sustainable future. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/bpi/eng/unescopress/hebdo97e/epd97e.htm>
- United Nations. (1972a). The Constitution of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Retrieved from <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=97&ArticleID=1496&l=en>
- United Nations. (1972b). Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Retrieved from

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?documentid=97&articleid=1503>

- United Nations. (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. Retrieved from
- United Nations. (1992). *Agenda 21*. Retrieved from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:
- United Nations. (1997). UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)
Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html>
- United Nations. (2015). Sustainable Development. Retrieved from
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/resourcelibrary>
- United Nations General Assembly. (2005). *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (59/237)*.
- Vavrus, F., & Bartlett, L. (2006). Comparatively knowing: making a case for the vertical case study. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 8(2), 95-103.
- Vavrus, F., & Bartlett, L. (Eds.). (2009). *Critical approaches to comparative education: vertical case studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vince, J., & Hardesty, B. D. (2017). Plastic pollution challenges in marine and coastal environments: from local to global governance. *Restoration Ecology*, 25(1), 123-128. doi:10.1111/rec.12388
- Wals, A., & Kieft, G. (2010). *Education for Sustainable Development research overview*. Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.
- Wang, G. (2003). *Report on the Educational for Sustainable Development in China: Basic concepts of ESD* (Vol. 1). Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House.

- Wang, H. (2017). New Multilateral Development Banks: Opportunities and Challenges for Global Governance. *Global Policy*, 8(1), 113-118.
doi:10.1111/1758-5899.12396
- WANG, H. J. N. R. (2009). China and Global Governance *Asian Perspective*, 33(3), 5-39.
- Wang, K. (2008). *UNESCO's Impact on China's Social Policy*. (Master of Arts), Beijing Language and Culture University, Beijing.
- Wang, X. (2008). Global governance and global education: General view of international organizations' roles in the world education development. . *Peking University Education Review*., 6(3), 152-164.
- Wang, X. (2014). ESD-An innovative practice for building quality education in China. In The NATIONAL working Committee for ESD in China (Ed.), *An review of the Ministry of Education ESD Seminar*
- Watts, J. (2010). *When a million Chinese jump-How China will save the mankind-or destroy it?* Riverside, NJ: Scribner.
- Weber, M. (1958). The three types of legitimate rule. *Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions*, 4(1), 1-11.
- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society : an outline of interpretive sociology* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Weiler, H. N. (1986). Withdrawing from Unesco: A decision in search of an argument *Comparative Education Review*, 30(1), 132-139.
- Weiss, T. (2000). Governance, good governance and global governance: Conceptual and actual challenges. In R. Wilkinson (Ed.), *The global governance reader*. New York: Routledge.

- Weiss, T. (2016). Rising Powers, Global Governance, and the United Nations. *Rising Powers Quarterly*, 1(2), 7-19.
- Westman, L., & Broto, V. C. (2018). Climate governance through partnerships: A study of 150 urban initiatives in China. *Global Environmental Change*, 50, 212-221. doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2018.04.008
- Wilkinson, R. (2005). Introduction: Concepts and issues in global governance. In R. Wilkinson (Ed.), *The Global Governance Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- World Bank. (2013). Project Cycle. Retrieved from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/PROJECTS/0,,contentMDK:20120731~menuPK:41390~pagePK:41367~piPK:51533~theSitePK:40941,00.html - eval>
- Wu, Y. (2010). *How do the Chinese schools implement Climate Change Education?* . . Beijing Association of ESD; Haidian Educational Research Institute.
- Xiao, R. (2012). China in the G20: Between status quo and reform. In S. Kennedy & S. Cheng (Eds.), *From rule takers to rule makers: The growing role of Chinese in global governance*. Bloomington, Indiana & Geneva, Switzerland: Research Center for Chinese Politics & Business, Indiana University, & International Centre for Trade & Sustainable Development.
- Xie, S. (December 14, 2001). Internationalization is an inevitable trend. *China Education Daily*. Retrieved from <http://www.jyb.cn/gb/2001/12/14/gjxx/gxgl/4.htm>
- Xie, Z. (2010a). *China and UNESCO: an empirical study of the international organizations' impact on member states*. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House.

- Xie, Z. (2010b). Evolution of the relations between China and UNESCO: A demonstration of the influence of international organizations on their member countries. *Pacific Journal*, 18(2), 28-39.
- Xie, Z. (2011). Teaching and learning: An empirical study on Chinese participation in UNESCO. *Foreign Affairs Review*(1), 48-54.
- Yang, Z. (1997). Examinations, Coping with Examinations, and the Relationship Between Exam-Oriented Education and Quality Education. *Chinese Education & Society*, 30(6), 15-17.
- Yu, F. (2004). The Cooperation with UNESCO on the Development of Basic Education. In Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (Ed.), *In Memory of the 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of the National Commission of China for UNESCO*. : Unpublished internal document.
- Yuan, Z. (1996). *Education policy studies*. Nanjing, China: Jiangsu Education Publishing House.
- Zhang, C. (2006). Commemorating the 25 fifth anniversary of the establishment of National Commission of China for UNESCO. . In Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (Ed.), *The history of National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO*. .
- Zhang, J. (2016). Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): Achievements in China and the Global Prospect. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 3(3).
doi:10.13718/j.cnki.sjy.2016.03.002
- Zhang, L. (2010). The macro perspective on the development and reform of Chinese education toward 2020.
- Zhang, L., Du, Y., & Shi, G. (2010). Emphasizing Education for Sustainable Development. *China Rural Education*(10), 7.

- Zhang, L., & Kang, N. (2007). *Chinese Education and Sustainable Development* (Vol. 17). Beijing: Science Press.
- Zhang, M. (2010). *International organizations and educational development*. . Shanghai, China.: Shanghai Education Publish. .
- Zhang, T. (2010). From environment to sustainable development: China's strategies for ESD in basic education. *International Review of Education*, 56(2-3), 329-341. doi:10.1007/s11159-010-9159-7
- Zhang, X. (2006). *Approaching to the Education for Sustainable Development: Current progress of ESD in China*. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House.
- Zhou, Y., Xiong, J., & Deng, M. (2009). National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO: connecting Chinese education with the world—an interview with Deputy Secretary General Du Yue. . *World Education Information*., pp. 10-14.
- Zhu, J. (2016). G20 institutional transition and global tax governance. *The Pacific Review*, 29(3), 465-471. doi:10.1080/09512748.2016.1154687

Curriculum Vitae

Qingqing Han

Work Experience

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 11/2017 – present | <p>Brightline Initiative, The Hague, The Netherlands and San Francisco, USA</p> <p><i>Head of Partnerships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead the organization's partnerships and external relationships with global leading organizations such as TED, the Economist, MIT, Harvard Business Review, BCG, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Saudi Telecom Company, NetEase, etc.• Successfully manage over 25 global projects and events in over 12 countries and 4 continents. |
| 02/2015 – 11/2017 | <p>The United Nations Office for Project Services, Copenhagen, Denmark</p> <p><i>Sustainability Management and Reporting Specialist</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage the UNOPS Sustainability Programme, including leading a team of 5 analysts, communication, budget, procurement, and stakeholder management.• Design and execute more than 10 global projects, e.g., portfolio analysis of USD1.4 billion and over 1000 projects, conduct training for over 200 personnel, etc. |
| 06/2012– 02/2013 | <p>The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, France</p> <p><i>Consultant</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered a comprehensive analysis report on the sustainable development and climate change policy and practice in China. The report is published by UNESCO.• Advised UN and government officials on transforming management and monitoring of project activities. |
| 09/2011 – 01/2015 | <p>National Committee on the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development Project in China</p> <p>Special Advisor to the Director (Part-time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produced project documents and supported policy development for municipality of Beijing in establishing new institutions and implementing education initiatives.• Led a team of seven in implementing projects, such as project quarterly reviews, and quality monitoring by conducting interviews and surveys with 700 stakeholders. |
| 05/2011– 08/2011 | <p>Ministry of Education, Beijing, China</p> <p><i>Researcher</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed data analytics and proposals for high-level officials in the ministry on enhancing international collaboration and project execution. |

- 09/2009– 05/2013 **Indiana University, Bloomington, USA**
Graduate Assistant to the Dean's Office
- Assisted the Dean and Associate Dean by providing support on cross-department communication, human resources and financial management, research, etc.
- 01/2009– 07/2009 **United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA**
Human Resources Intern
- Supported the organization of UN workshops and stakeholder communications.
 - Managed the UN staff training data and large learning platform and database.
- 09/2006– 01/2009 **National Institute of Innovation Management, Hangzhou, China**
Programme Officer
- Took charge of the financial management of the institute and its 12 projects, including budgeting, monitoring expenditures, and creating financial reports.

Education

- 09/2009 – 05/2019 **Indiana University Bloomington, USA**
 Full scholarship in 2009-2014
 Ph.D. in History, Philosophy, and Policy Studies
- 11/2013 – 05/2014 **Wageningen University, The Netherlands**
 Visiting Scholar on sustainability and project implementation
- 09/2009 – 05/2013 **Indiana University Bloomington, USA**
 Full scholarship
 M.S. in International and Comparative Education Policy
- 09/2004 – 06/2008 **Zhejiang University, China**
 Excellent undergraduate scholarship; Fortis scholarship (Top 1 percent student only)
 B.A. in Management

Skills and Certifications

Languages: English (fluent), Chinese (native), French (basic)

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, MS Project), SPSS, SAS, NVIVO

PRINCE2 Certified Trainer and Practitioner (Projects IN Controlled Environments)

Managing Successful Programmes (2011) Practitioner

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) G4 Certified

Editorial Board Member and Reviewer for Journal of Management and Sustainability

Key Publications

- Han, Q.** (May, 2015). Education for Sustainable Development and Climate Change Education: A Status Report. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 9 (1), pp.62-71.
- Shi, G., **Han, Q.**, Ao, C. (2013). Education for Sustainable Development in China: Effective Cases and Challenge. Beijing: The National Working Committee for ESD in China.
- Xiao, L., **Han, Q.** (2013). New Trends in the U. S. Education Reform: Review on the U.S. Education Reform and National Security Report. *Comparative Education Review*, 278(3), pp.86-91.
- Han, Q.**, Zhong, M. (2007). The New Mode of Undergraduate Education: A case study of Zhejiang University. *Research in Higher Education of Engineering*, 3, pp.48-51.